

S E R M O N S

O N T H E

FORTY-FIFTH PSALM.

Being the Substance of a series of Discourses
preached at CERES, betwixt the latter end
of *August* 1772, and the beginning of *April*
1774.

BY THOMAS BENNET.

CANT. ii. 3. & vi. 4. *As the apple-tree among the trees
of the wood, so is my Beloved among the sons.—Thou art beau-
tiful, O my Love, as Tirzah; comely as Jerusalem, terrible as
an army with banners.*

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To the ASSOCIATE CONGREGATION of *Ceres*.

DEAR FRIENDS,

THE following Discourses were preached betwixt the latter end of August 1772, and the beginning of April 1774. They claim your particular attention, having been all delivered in your hearing, and now published principally with a view to your edification, and at the earnest desire of many of you. They are presented to you in the same homely style in which they were delivered. What some call a graceful Diction, and a fine Address, are things to which I have no pretence; and am so far from thinking the Gospel stands in need of any such ornaments to recommend it either to its hearers or readers, that I think they tend greatly to obscure its beauty, disgust the more serious part of the audience; or, at any rate, to carry the attention of the hearers off from the *matter*, to the *manner* wherein it is delivered. The judicious Mr *Robert Trail*, speaking concerning the manner of preaching the Gospel, expresses himself in words to the following purpose: It has always been observed, that, as an affected manner of speaking and writing upon religious subjects has at any time come into the Church, the life and power of godliness has gone out. It is readily granted, that the Gospel, and the manner of preaching it, are distinct things: But it is as certain, the distinction is seldom, if ever kept up, when the preacher indulges himself in using technical terms, and an airy pedantic manner of delivery. As you would readily expect the number of these Discourses to exceed what is stated in the Proposals, I need only in-

form you, that as the most of them were preached in the Winter-season, when the day is not only short, but when we must use all possible brevity, as many of you are at a considerable distance from the place of public worship; the matter contained in two, and sometimes in three, when delivered from the pulpit, including any extemporary enlargements, which cannot now be recovered, makes but one Sermon in print, which you know must greatly reduce the number. As your diligent attendance upon Ordinances, and particularly when treating upon this subject, with the intimations I had from severals, (some of whom are now removed by death,) that the Lord was graciously pleased to bless some of these Discourses to their edification, did not a little encourage me to persevere in going through the subject; as also to comply with your desire in publishing what was said upon it: That it may please the Lord to make the perusal of these Discourses further useful to you, and all into whose hands they may come, is the earnest prayer of him, who reckons himself under every obligation to serve you in the Lord.

THOMAS BENNET.

CERES, }
Aug. 27. 1781.

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SER.

S E R M O N I.

The Spiritual Marriage betwixt CHRIST and the CHURCH, matter of great Joy and Gladness.

PSAL. xlv. 1.

To the Chief Musician upon Shoshannim, for the Sons of Korah, Maschil; A Song of Loves.

My Heart is inditing a good matter: I speak of the things which I have made touching the King; my Tongue is the Pen of a ready Writer.

THE subject-matter of this psalm is JESUS CHRIST and the CHURCH, with their mutual love for each other, resulting from the marriage-union and relation subsisting between them. The psalm may be considered as an epitome, or abridgement of the book of Canticles, there being the greatest resemblance between them, both in matter and style. For any to affirm that Solomon and his marriage with Pharaoh's daughter, are treated of in this psalm, must be owing to great inattention to the matter of it, as also to the application the Apostle to the Hebrews makes of verse 6th to our Lord Jesus, Heb. i. 8. That the psalm is an *epithalamium* or *marriage-song*, is readily granted. But the things affirmed concerning the Bridegroom, will only apply to Christ, and those spoken of the Bride, are applicable only to these who have the honour and felicity of being espoused unto him. And the account we have of the fruits of the marriage,

riage, in the two last verses of the psalm, puts it beyond question, that the parties described in it, are Christ and the Church.

The title of the psalm is, *To the chief Musician, or, To him that excels*, as the word originally signifies. It was given to him who presided over the rest of the Levites, in the worship of God in the Temple, by singing on instruments of music.

The psalm is said to be upon *Shoshannim*, which signifies *lilies* or *roses*. And as our Lord is called *the Rose of Sharon*, and the Church compared to the *Lily among thorns*, some think the psalm is designed a song upon, or concerning Christ and the Church. But as we find the word *Shoshannim* in the title of other psalms, which differ from this in their matter, we may view the word as denoting some particular instrument or tune to which the psalm was to be sung by the sons of Korah, in the Temple-service.

There is both a general and special title given to this psalm. The general title is *Maschil*; that is, *an instructing Song*, or *a Song to make wise*. If any want to be wise to salvation, they may learn from this song. They are the things of Christ which are here treated of, and these are properly suited to give instruction. This psalm is eminently adapted to give us instruction about the glory and excellency of the Redeemer's person, love, saving offices, works, grace and fullness, and the beauty and comeliness of his Church; all which she derives from him.

The special title of the psalm, denoting the matter contained in it, is *A Song of loves*, and it may be designed *A Song of loves* in the plural number, either,

1. Because it mentions a mutual and interchangeable love. It is not only a song concern-
ing

ing the love of Christ to the Church, or the love of the Church to him; but it respects the mutual love that takes place between them. Christ loves the Church, and rejoiceth over her; as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride. And the Church loves him, as the genuine effect of his love to her.

2. It may be called *A Song of loves*; "Be-
" cause of the many fruits of that one single
" love that is between Christ and the Church." Many in their number, and incomparably great in their nature, are the fruits of Christ's love to the Church; *he loved her, and gave himself for her*, Eph. v. 2. And the believer's love to Christ, is not without its fruits and effects. But of these afterwards, if the Lord will.

3. This love may be expressed in the plural number, to point forth the excellency of it: As the book of Canticles is called *The Song of Songs* by way of eminency; so this psalm may be designed *A Song of Loves*, as describing the most excellent love. There is no love once to be compared with that which takes place betwixt Christ and the Church. We think the psalm is called *A Song of loves*, chiefly in the last sense, because the spiritual love that is between Christ and the Church, is exceeding great and excellent. Before proceeding further in the explication, we may discourse a little upon the special matter of the psalm, namely, "the love of Christ to the Church, and her love to him;" both which seem to be set before us in these words, *A Song of loves*.

And we may observe this Doctrine from them.

Doct. *The love that takes place between Christ and his Bride and Spouse, is great and excellent,*
and

and affords solid ground for spiritual mirth and gladness, Rev. xix. 7. "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him, for the marriage of the Lamb is come; and his wife hath made herself ready."

In discoursing from this Text and Doctrine,

I. We may speak a little of that love that takes place between Christ and his Bride, in virtue of their espousals.

II. Illustrate the truth of the doctrine, or shew that the love which takes place between Christ and the Church his Bride, in virtue of their espousals, lays a solid foundation for spiritual mirth and gladness.

III. Endeavour to make some improvement of the subject. And all is proposed, as the Lord may be pleased to aid and direct.

I. It was proposed to speak a little of the love that takes place between Christ and his people in the day of their espousals.

In speaking to this Head, we may

1. Take a short view of the love of Christ to his Bride and Spouse.

2. Of her love to him.

1. Then, as to the love of Christ to his people, it may be observed in general, that it is beyond description in itself considered. It is above all creature comprehension, altogether ineffable; so that it is rather a view of it in its effects than in itself, we can propose to take. Christ's love to his people never had any beginning, and it knows no end. It is altogether free and sovereign, rich, generous and preventing, ardent and unchangeable. It has its length, depth, breadth and height: But who can take its dimensions, seeing it

it passes knowledge? Eph. iii. 18, 19. All Saints know something of the love of Christ; but all they know about it, while in the body, when compared with what it is in itself, is but like a drop in the bucket, to the ocean.

Let us contemplate this love then, only in a very few of its amazing fruits and effects. And,

1. The love of Christ to his people influenced him to stand up as their Surety, in the council of peace, from eternity, and become bound to the justice of God, to pay all that debt they had contracted, by their sin and apostacy from God, in the first Adam. Hence says he to the Father, Psal. xl. 6, 7, 8. "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire, mine ears hast thou opened: burnt-offering and sin-offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart." The Apostle to the Hebrews commenting on the above text, ch. x. 5,—10. tells us, It was the will of *Jehovah* the Father, to have an elect world sanctified, through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all, and that this will of the Father, he most cheerfully engaged to execute. We may view our Lord Jesus as addressing himself to the justice of God, in behalf of an elect world, in the morning of everlasting love, in much the same language with that of the Apostle Paul to Philemon, in behalf of Onesimus, Philem. ver. 18, 19. "If they have wronged thee, or owe thee ought, put that to my account. I have written it with mine own hand, I will repay it."

2. Another fruit of Christ's love to his people, is his becoming man; taking upon him their nature, and becoming flesh, as they are. The

“Word was made flesh.” The children he engaged from eternity to rescue out of the hands of Satan, and save from sin, and the wrath to come; “were partakers of flesh and blood,” Heb. ii. 14. “and he hath likewise taken part of the same.” This is an astonishing instance of the Redeemer’s love to the sons of men. Though he was rich, so rich as to be possessed of all possible perfection and blessedness, yet for the sake of sinful dust and ashes, “he became poor, that they through his poverty might be rich,” 2 Cor. viii. 9. When the Apostle sets forth the love of Christ evidenced by his taking on the human nature, he intimates, it was such an act of condescension, as that by doing it, “he made himself of no reputation,” Phil. ii. 7. And elsewhere, says he, “Great is the mystery of Godliness: God was manifest in the flesh.” Many mysteries present themselves to the eye of faith, viewing the incarnation of the Son of God, and among these, none greater than that of love: Many were the mountains he had to overleap, coming to the help of his people. And the necessity of his becoming bone of their bone, and flesh of their flesh, was none of the least of them.

3. Another fruit of our Lord’s love to his people, is *his fulfilling all righteousness for them*, Matth. iii. 17. Christ has so fulfilled the law for his spiritual seed, as that the righteous Judge considers it as fulfilled in them, Rom. viii. 4. Had the law a demand upon us for a holy nature, which we received in our first Covenant-head, and lost by our fall in him? This demand, Christ as our Surety has fully answered, by giving our nature a subsistence in his own person. Did the law demand perfect obedience to all its precepts from us? This demand Christ has perfectly complied

plied with. He became obedient, and the obedience of his life extended to every divine commandment, whether calling for duty in an active way and manner, or forbidding every evil thing: "He did no iniquity, neither was any guile found in his mouth," 1 Pet. ii. 22. And saith another Apostle, 1 John iii. 5. "Ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins: and in him is no sin."

4. Another fruit of Christ's love to his spouse is, That he condescended to suffer and die for her. He has not only answered every demand of the law-precept in the room and stead of his people, but he has endured the punishment due to them also. He was made sin and a curse for them, 2 Cor. v. 21. Gal. iii. 13. The Covenant of Works being broken, the awful, but just threatening thereto annexed, behoved to be executed, either upon the transgressor in his own person, or a Surety in his room. Now, our Lord Jesus, for the great love he bears to a company of our fallen family, most willingly consented it should be executed upon him, and that they should go free; that his soul should be made an offering, to expiate their sin; that he should be broken and bruised for their iniquities, Isaiah liii. 10.; bear the chastisement, griefs and sorrows due to them for sin, that by his stripes, they might be healed. For these purposes, he tells us, he became manifest in the flesh. Hence says he, Matth. xx. 28. "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many;" or instead of the many, the definite and certain number God had from the beginning ordained to obtain eternal glory through him. And agreeable to his design in coming into the world, the
Apostle

Apostle tells us, *he became obedient unto death even the death of the cross*, Phil. ii. 8. And as he was pleased thus to give himself a sacrifice in the stead of his people, as well as for their good, the only cord that did, or could bind him as a sacrifice to the horns of the altar, was his own rich and free love. Hence saith the beloved Disciple, 1 John iii. 16. "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he hath laid down his life for us." And saith another Apostle, Gal. ii. 20. "He loved me, and he gave himself for me." The cup of sufferings, justice put into Christ's hand, had many bitter ingredients in it, and yet so great was his love to his people, that nothing seems to have given him more pain than any attempts that were made to stand in the way of his drinking it. Hence, when *Peter* at one time endeavoured to dissuade him from it, he tendered him a most awful rebuke. "Get thee behind me Satan," says he, "thou art an offence unto me." And at another time, when he was minded to do his utmost to bring him off the field by force, he saith to him, John xviii. 11. "Put up thy sword into his sheath: The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?"

5. Another fruit of Christ's love to his people is, that he exercises a most tender care over them, and sympathy towards them, all the while they are in this sinful and ensnaring world, after they are espoused to him. The Bride of Christ, while in this world, is like the *lily among thorns*, Cant. ii. 2. Like a *lamb among wolves*, Luke x. 3. But however weak and defenceless she is in herself, and however strong and potent her enemies are, it is her safety and comfort, that he cares for her.

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The hedge of his special Providence is ever about his people. Hence says the Prophet, when reproving the king of *Judah*, for relying upon the king of *Syria*, for help against his enemies, and distrusting the Lord, 2 Chron. xvi. 9. "The eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of *them* whose heart is perfect towards him." The Lord Jesus exercises an unremitting care and diligence about his people, Psalm cxxi. 4. "Behold, he that keepeth Israel, shall neither slumber nor sleep." He has a most tender feeling of the infirmities of his people, Heb. v. 2. He is with them in all their tribulations, Isa. xliii. 2. He is their unwearied Guide, constant Leader and Attendant, in prosperity and adversity; yea, such is his love and care for them, that he carries them in his bosom, Isa. xl. 11. "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: He shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry *them* in his bosom; and shall gently lead those that are with young." He is a wall of fire for their protection, against every assault of the enemy, whether from without or within. It is owing to his care and sympathy toward his people, that they not only sustain no real disadvantage, by the trials they meet with in the house of their pilgrimage, but are really benefited by them all. Hence says the Apostle, 2 Cor. iv. 17, 18. "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: For the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."

6. and *lastly*, Our Lord Jesus manifests his tender love and regard for his Bride, by his earnest desire to have her completely happy, in the enjoyment of himself, and the contemplation of his glory. This is what we see his heart is much set upon; we never find him addressing himself to the Father in a more pressing manner, than for the glorification of his people, John xvii. 24. "Father," says he, "I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me." He will never reckon himself completely satisfied, until he see the travel of his soul before the throne of glory, in one entire body, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing.

The *second* thing on this head was, To speak a little of the believer's love to Christ.

All true believers love a God in Christ, above all other persons and things. His name is to them as ointment poured forth, and they love him. The language of their heart is, "his mouth is most sweet, yea, he is altogether lovely," Cant. v. *ult.* Though no Christian loves Christ as he should, and desires to do; all who are really espoused to Christ, love him in sincerity, and their love to him is the genuine fruit of his love to them, 1 John iv. 19. "We love him, because he first loved us." It is the manifestation of his love to us, and in us by his Spirit, that constrains us to love him.

1. True believers evidence their love to Christ, by putting the highest value and esteem upon him. Hence says the Psalmist, verse 2. "Thou art fairer than the children of men." It is also witnessed of the believer by our Lord himself, that in the day wherein converting grace reaches
his

his heart, he is willing to sell all that he may buy the pearl of great price, Matth. xiii. 45, 46. "The kingdom of Heaven is like unto a merchant-man seeking goodly pearls; who, when he found one pearl of great price, he went and sold all that he had, and bought it." This pearl of great price is Christ himself; and whenever the sinner finds him, or rather is found by him, he is willing to part with all for him. He is disposed to let go sin and self for him. They who are once so happy as to be Christ's, "Cru- cify the flesh with the affections and lusts," Gal. v. 24. And though self is naturally the sinner's greatest darling, and that with which, of all things, he is most loth to part; yet he denies it in the day of his espousals with Christ, and takes up with him alone as his "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption," 1 Cor. i. 3. Hence the Apostle Paul tells us, Phil. iii. 7, 8. when once he tasted of the excellent knowledge of Christ, he counted all his former attainments but loss.

2. Believer's evidence their love to Christ by thinking much upon him. It is the character of the people of God, that *they think upon his name*, Mal. iii. 13. They meditate upon what he is in himself, what he is to them, and what he has done for them. Those we dearly love, come frequently into our mind. The believer thinks much upon the love of Christ, and remembers it more than wine, more than all sensual pleasures and delights. The Psalmist speaking in the name of all true believers, says, Psal. xlviii. 9. "We have thought of thy loving kindness, O God, in the midst of thy Temple." We find our Lord putting the Jews to the trial concerning their thoughts about him. *What think ye of Christ?*
says

says he, Matth. xxii. 42. True believers think upon the beauty of Christ; they see a beauty in him that renders him desirable to their souls. There is nothing in him lovely to a carnal eye; but one that is made *light in the Lord*, admires him above all; for he sees him to be all, and in all to his soul. The believer thinks upon the suitability that is in Christ to his case as being *full of grace and truth*, John. i. 14. And the more he is admitted to know about Christ, the more are his thoughts fixed upon him.

3. Their love evidences itself to Christ, by a regard to his commandments and ordinances. Hence says he to his Disciples, John xiv. 15. "If ye love me, keep my commandments; for he that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me." And saith the beloved Disciple, 1 John v. 3. "This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments." As if the Apostle had said, if we unfeignedly endeavour through grace, to yield obedience to all God's commandments, from a principle of faith in, and love to him, it is a sure evidence we love him. And as they evidence their love to him by a tender regard to his laws, they do it also by delighting in his ordinances; hence says the Psalmist, Psal. xxvi. 8. "Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth."

4. They do it by a hearty regard to his truths. They receive the truth and the love of it, and value and esteem it more than their necessary food: Yea, it is the "joy and rejoicing of their hearts," Jer. xv. 16. It is better in their account than many thousands, and great sums of gold and silver. All the doctrines of the gospel they highly esteem, and cannot hear any of them spoken

spoken against, but with holy indignation, Psal. cxxxix. 21. "Do not I hate them, O LORD, " that hate thee? And am not I grieved with " those that rise up against thee?"

5. They evidence their love to Christ, by love to his people; they love the saints who love Christ; for he that loves him who begat, cannot fail to love those who are begotten of him, and are accordingly the excellent ones of the earth. Our Lord tells his Disciples, that their love to one another, was to be a special evidence to the world, of their relation to him, John xiii. 35. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another;" by delighting in the company, and taking pleasure in conversing together; as also, by embracing every opportunity to do good to one another. The Disciples of Christ are disposed, when acting suitably, "to do good to all men," as opportunity serves, but especially unto them who are of the household of faith; children of the same family, and heirs of the same inheritance with themselves. It is indeed to be lamented, that true Christian love is very much upon the decline at this day, and even among professed witnesses for Christ, which is a sad evidence of their love to him being but weak and feeble.

6. They do it, by seeking the advancement of his declarative glory in their day and generation: God has joined his glory, and the good of his people together; and what he has joined, they are not for putting asunder. When they have grace in exercise, they hate the detestable character of being seekers of their own things, and being entirely negligent about those things which are Jesus Christ's. They are grieved when they see him dishonoured. Hence says the Psalmist, Psal. cxix. 158. "I beheld the transgressors, and

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“ was grieved ; because they kept not thy word.” They rejoice, when they see the crown flourishing upon his head, and pray for the success and prosperity of his kingdom, saying with the Psalmist, Psal. lxxii. 19. “—Let the whole earth be “ filled with his glory.”

7. They evidence their love to Christ by earnest desires after fellowship and communion with him : The lifting up of the light of his countenance upon them, puts more joy into their hearts, than the carnal man can have when his corn and wine most abound, Psal. iv. 6, 7. And as they delight in his company, they are grieved when he hides his face from them, and cannot be easy in his absence. They then adopt the language of the royal Psalmist, Psal. xxx. 7. “ —Thou didst hide thy face, and I was “ troubled.” When those who have had experience of the Lord’s shining on their souls, come to be under the hiding of his face, and are sensible their Beloved hath withdrawn himself, they will leave no mean of divine appointment untried, till they find *him whom their soul loveth*, as we see in the case of the Spouse, Job, David and others. And this is a real proof of true love to him.

8. and *lastly*, Many of the Lord’s people have evidenced their love to him, by parting with all that was near and dear to them in this world, for his sake ; and even with life itself. Many suffered for Christ under the Old Testament dispensation, as we see Heb. xi. 37, 38. Multitudes suffered for his sake under Rome Pagan, during the Ten Persecutions ; and under the tyranny of Rome Christian there have been a great cloud of witnesses for Christ, “ who loved not their lives unto the “ death, but valiantly resisted unto blood, striving against the abominations of the man of sin.” And in the late cruel persecution in our own land,

many

many were honoured to seal their testimony against Prelatical usurpations over the Church, with their blood: To whose faithful contendings for the truth, as instruments in the Lord's hand, we are greatly indebted for these liberties, both civil and religious, which we have now for a long time enjoyed.

II. The *second* head in the method was, To illustrate the truth of the doctrine, or shew, that the love that takes place between Christ and the Church, in the day of their espousals, lays a solid foundation for spiritual mirth and gladness. Now this truth will appear, when we consider the joy that takes place among all parties concerned in this matter.

It is matter of joy to JEHOVAH in the person of the Father, to see sinners of mankind espoused to his Son. Hence says he, upon the return of the prodigal son, Luke xv. 32. "It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: For this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found." God the Father is frequently set forth in Scripture, as rejoicing at the espousals of sinners with the Saviour; see Zeph. iii. 17. Jer. xxxii. 41. Not that he is subject to human passions; though they are sometimes ascribed to him in Scripture, it is only after the manner of man: When he is said to rejoice in any thing, it is to be viewed, as expressive of the real satisfaction, complacency and delight, he has in seeing his eternal purposes, and particularly those of his grace, accomplished. And so we find the whole work of saving sinners, designed *the pleasure of the Lord*, Isa. liii. 10. "The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand."

2. It is matter of joy to the Saviour, when sinners are espoused unto him: In that day, and that hour,

hour, when a sinner is determined to give his heart and hand to the Saviour, *Jesus rejoiceth in spirit*. Accordingly we are told, "the day of his espousals, is the day of the gladness of his heart," Cant. iii. 11. He then sees the fruit of his hard labour, the travel of his soul, and therefore he is satisfied. Isa. liii. 11. God is glorified in that day: The sinner that was before ready to perish, has passed from death to life, so that he shall never come into condemnation: There is a new pearl added to the Redeemer's Crown; and all these afford matter of joy to the Saviour.

3. The person who is so happy as to be espoused to Christ, rejoices, and has great reason to do it. See the language of the soul joined to the Lord, Isa. lxi. 10. "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness." The poor sinner in virtue of his espousals with the Saviour, has the greatest reason that may be, to rejoice; "he is translated from the power of darkness, into the kingdom of God's dear Son," Col. i. 13. The relation into which he is brought with Christ, effectually secures his interest in all things needful, pertaining both to the life that now is, and that which is to come; and therefore believing, he may, and should rejoice, *with joy unspeakable and full of glory*.

4. and lastly, The espousal of sinners with the Saviour, is matter of joy to the holy angels, who are the friends of the glorious Bridegroom; and ministering servants to those who are espoused unto him, Luke xv. 10. "There is joy, in the presence of the angels of God, over one sinner that repenteth." The angels rejoice, both from the consideration of the glory that redounds

to God in the conversion of sinners, and the happy state into which sinners are brought. We may only farther add here, that the espousals of sinners to Christ, is matter of joy to God the Holy Ghost. If he is *grieved* when his testimony concerning our Lord Jesus is rejected, must he not *rejoice* when it is cordially received?

III. The *third* head was, to make a short improvement of what has been said. And,

The first use of the doctrine may be of information.

1. From what has been said, we may see the love of God richly displayed towards perishing sinners of mankind, in providing such a match for them as his own eternal Son. He provided this match for them from eternity, in setting him up in the council of peace, as the Surety of the New Covenant. He married our nature with the divine, in the person of his only begotten Son, and thereby laid a foundation for a marriage betwixt him and our persons; and as he brought the first woman to her husband, he brings the sinner to the Saviour, in the day of effectual calling. Hence says our Lord, John vi. 44. "No man can come unto me, except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him."

2. We may see what a pleasant discovery God has made of his wisdom, in the work of our redemption and salvation. Sinners are saved in such a way, as redounds to the glory of all the persons of the adorable Trinity: And every perfection of the divine nature shines forth with a peculiar glory and lustre. *Glory to God in the highest, is sweetly connected with peace upon earth, and good will toward men.* The espousals of sinners with the Saviour, is matter of joy both in heaven and earth.

3. See

3. See what an honourable and dignified company true believers are; they are espoused to the Son of God; "their Maker is their Husband," Isa. liv. 5. To be espoused to him, is an uplifting privilege indeed! Hereby "the righteous is more excellent than his neighbour." Christ brings them all to honour, who are espoused to him; and for riches, all things are theirs, because they are his.

4. We may see who they are that have cause to rejoice. There is much carnal mirth in the world; much joy that is likely to end in heaviness; but there are none who have cause to rejoice, or who ever experienced any true and solid joy, but those who are espoused to Christ; they have the seed of joy sown in their hearts; they have good cause to rejoice; and every remembrance of their having been brought to close with Christ, may afford them a new song of praise, and fill their hearts with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

The *second* use of the doctrine may be for trial and examination. Are you espoused to the Son of God?

1. If so, you are dead to the law as a Covenant of Works, Rom. vii. 4. "Wherefore, my brethren, ye are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." And that same Apostle says elsewhere, "I through the law, am dead to the law." So if you be married to Christ, *you are dead to the law*; you have no expectation of any favour at the hand of God upon account of your own obedience to it. Though you study to yield obedience to the law as the *rule* of your duty, you have taken Christ in his perfect righteousness, as the

end

end of the law, in order to your access to, and acceptance in the sight of God.

2. Christ is very precious to all who are espoused to him, 1 Pet. ii. 7. "Unto you therefore which believe, he is precious." He is precious to those who believe; precious in his person, Cant. v. 10.; precious in all his offices; and there is nothing you more desire, if espoused to him, than to have the real experience of the exercise of them upon your souls. His fulness is very precious to you; and you cannot think upon the relation he stands in to you, but with pleasure and delight, wonder and astonishment at his condescension, in espousing you to himself.

3. Those who are espoused to Christ, are, or at least, would desire to be of the same mind with David, concerning the marriage-contract, that is, the Covenant of Grace and Promise, 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. They approve of it as ordered in all things; as having a peculiar fitness for answering all the great and glorious ends God proposed by it. They view it, as containing all their salvation; and therefore, their souls cleave to it in love and desire. It is the strong hold they betake themselves to in all their straits, and there they find comfort.

4. Those who are married to Christ, delight in his company, and are disposed to improve every opportunity of enjoying fellowship and communion with him. The Spiritual Israel are a people near to the Lord; and being admitted to some special nearness to him, they desire to be nearer. Their souls follow hard after him, and the desires of their hearts are towards him. If you are then espoused to this glorious Bridegroom, you have an habitual desire to have the marriage consummated: And this is the case in a
special

special manner, when you are admitted to more than ordinary nearness to him. Then you are in some measure, in case to adopt the language of the Spouse, Cant. viii. 14. "Make haste, my "Beloved, and be thou like to a roe, or to a "young hart upon the mountains of spices." We shall not further enlarge upon this use of the doctrine; you may try yourselves, by what was said concerning the evidences of the believers love to Christ.

The last use of the doctrine, shall be in a word of exhortation.

1. We exhort you who are espoused to Christ, to bless God, and be thankful for his distinguished kindness to you: *Oh, that men would praise the Lord for his goodness.* Praise him for sending his Son into the world in the character of the Bridegroom of souls, and for determining your hearts to accept the offers of his grace and love. You would never have done it, without the revelation of his powerful arm. Grace is no less displayed in bringing sinners to accept of the Saviour, than it is in providing, and sending him into the world. Let it be your constant care and study, through grace to walk worthy of the Lord, endeavouring in all things to please him. She that is married, is careful to please her husband. Let it be your chief care to please your husband, whoever should be offended with you, for acting dutifully toward him. Remember *you are not your own, but bought with a price*, even the costly price of your Husband's precious blood; *therefore glorify him, in your bodies and spirits, which are his.*

Seek to have others espoused to Christ, and for this end, commend him to those about you. Commend him with the tongue, as you have occasion, in your places and stations: And let your daily

daily walk and conversation before the world, speak for him. Only let your conversation be as becometh the gospel.

2dly, We exhort you who are strangers to Christ, wedded to the law as a covenant, and to your vile lusts and corruptions, to consider what a deplorable condition you are in. You are under the curse of the broken law, *children of wrath*, Eph. ii. 3. And heirs of hell and condemnation; slaves to sin and Satan, without God, without Christ; and this being the case with you, you are every moment in hazard of falling headlong into eternal perdition. There is no more betwixt you and it, but the brittle thread of your natural life; and how soon that may be broken, God only knows, and then your condition is for ever miserable beyond expression. Consider that you may yet be espoused to the Son of God; he waits that he may be gracious to you; he is yet saying, and saying it to you, "I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies," Hos. ii. 19. Oh then, look to him, and plead with him, that he may do as he hath said, to each of you in particular: Aim at laying hold of the promise by faith, and a relying upon the faithfulness of the Promiser. Look to him for the spirit of faith to bring you to this exercise. And for your encouragement, consider that he is not only saying, "I will betroth thee unto me;" but he is telling you also, that he will bring such as you are to close the match with him, Hos. ii. 16. "It shall be at that day, that thou shalt call me *Ishi*, and no more *Baali*." This promise has much in it for your encouragement. It says Christ is willing to be espoused to you; that he is presently

ready to be espoused to you ; and presently ready to remove all your difficulties against being espoused to him. “ Thou shalt call me *Isbi*,” would he say, though you have no heart to the bargain, “ I will make you willing,” Psal. cx. 3. Yea the promise says, he will have sinners to close the match with him, whether you do it or not. Many have done it already, and it remains that others do it besides those who are already gathered unto him. *The pleasure of the Lord must prosper in his hand*, in the application of the purchased redemption, as well as it has done in the impretation of it ; *He must see his seed*. Consider that he is such a match as perfectly suits your case. You are empty of all that is good, but *in him all fulness dwells* ; you are foolish, but *in him are hid all the treasures of his wisdom and knowledge*. You are guilty, but in the way of embracing him by faith, you shall be justified from all things, from which you cannot be by the law of Moses ; for *he is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth*, Rom. x. 4. You are vile and polluted with sin, but in your closing with him, he will make you *appear as doves, whose wings are covered with silver, and their feathers with yellow gold*, through his comeliness put upon you. You are *heirs of hell* by nature, and exposed to the *wrath to come* ; but being espoused to Christ, you shall be *heirs of God, and joint heirs with the first born among many brethren* ; heirs of that inheritance that is *incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away*. He who is now willing to betroth you to himself, is the God of glory, the Author of glory, the Purchaser of glory, and the Bestower of glory. And all who are so wise as to embrace him by faith, shall for ever reign in life, through, and with him.

S E R M O N II.

The things concerning Zion's KING, good Matters to all his true Subjects.

PSAL. xlv. 1.

My heart is inditing a good matter : I speak of the things which I have made touching the King ; my tongue is the pen of a ready writer.

THIS psalm consists of three parts; the title, *A Song of Loves*, of which we have already discoursed. The preface of it contained in the words now read; and the song itself from the second verse to the end. In the preface we are informed what the subject-matter of the psalm is, namely, *a good matter touching the King*. More particularly,

1. That which is treated of, is a *good matter*; that which is most true and incomparably excellent. Every thing contained in the word of God, is a good matter; and those parts of Divine Revelation which do most directly set before us the person, offices, grace and fulness of our glorious Surety and Redeemer Jesus Christ, are eminently to be viewed as *good matters* by the sons of men; and are really so, in the esteem and regard of all true believers.

2. We may observe whom this *good matter* respects, namely *the King*. The person here intended, is none other than our Lord Jesus Christ. He is called *the King* by way of eminence; for he is *King of kings, and Lord of lords*. The Psalmist in this song, treats of the things which concern
Christ,

Christ, of the glory of his person, riches of his love, the fulness of grace that is treasured up in him, and the ample endowments, in virtue of which he is every way fitted and qualified for his glorious undertaking, as the Head and Surety of the New Covenant. And these are good matters; good in themselves, and good in the estimation of all the children of the King.

3. We may observe, that these things which concern this glorious King, are things made and prepared: They are not rude and indigested things. "I speak of the things which I have made touching the King." These things are not from the Psalmist: Not made by him as their author; but he made them under the direction and influences of the Spirit of inspiration; and he set his heart to study and meditate much upon these things which were revealed to him *touching the King*, as did the other Prophets, 1 Pet. i. 10, 11. "Of which salvation the Prophets have enquired, and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you; searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when he testified before-hand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." The Psalmist took a feast to his own soul upon the things concerning the King, while he was setting them before others, as all the stewards of the mysteries of God ought also to do.

4. We may notice the *manner* in which these things were conceived by the Psalmist; they were apprehended by the heart. All suitable exercise about Christ, and the things of Christ, must begin at the heart. *My heart is inditing a good matter.* The word we render *inditing*, signifies to spring up as water doth from its fountain-head, and so falls

into

into the stream in the most natural and easy manner. The Psalmist's heart was full of Christ, and the things which concern him; yea, so full, that it was ready to run over. And when this is the case, it is easy to speak of him, and the things which concern him. Psal. lxxiii. 5. "My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness: And my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips." *Lastly*, In the words we may observe the manner in which the Psalmist expressed these things. It was with much ease and readiness, *My tongue is the pen of a ready writer*; as if he had said, My tongue is like the pen of one who, with the greatest ease and readiness, takes down every sentence, and lets no word slip, that drops from the mouth of the speaker.

From these words thus explained, we observe the following Doctrine:

Doct. *The things which concern our Lord Jesus Christ, the King and Head of the Church, are good matters in the estimation of all true believers: They are good in themselves, and esteemed truly good by all who do believe.* "My heart is inditing a good matter: I speak of the things which I have made touching the King."

In discoursing from this Subject, we shall, through Divine assistance, endeavour,

I. To speak a little of the King.

II. To mention some things which concern him, and are here said to be *good matters*, in the esteem of his people.

III. Give the reasons of the Doctrine, or shew whence it is, that the things concerning this King are viewed as matters truly good by all who believe in him.

IV. Apply.

I. The

I. The *first* thing proposed is, To speak a little of the King.

And here *first*, I may shew that Jesus Christ is a King.

Secondly; Shew that he is *The KING* by way of eminency.

It was proposed *first* to shew, that Jesus Christ is a King: And,

1. That he is a King, will appear when we consider, that he is expressly so called by *JEHOVAH* the Father, Psal. ii. 6. says he, "Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion." And to the same purpose he speaks, Micah v. 2. "But thou, Beth-lehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me, who shall be Ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting."

2. Jesus affirms concerning himself, that he is a King; and he is, the *Amen, The faithful and true witness*, Rev. iii. 14. Yea, he not only affirms this truth concerning himself, but he died a martyr for the truth of his kingly office. That he is a King; the King and Head of his Church, is that good confession he witnessed before Pontius Pilate, John xviii. 37. "Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a King? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a King. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth."

3. This truth will appear when it is considered, that all true believers own and acknowledge him to be a King, and their King in particular. Yea, they exult and glory in him as their King, Isa. xxxiii. 22. say they, "The Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our Lawgiver, the Lord is our King, and he will save us." True believers
take

take him for their King; and so dear are his kingly prerogatives to them, that many of them, and not a few in our own land, have been honoured to resist unto blood, testifying against the wicked encroachments that have been made upon his crown-rights, as King and Head over the Church, his own house. It is very observable in Scripture, that so soon as persons were brought to any true acquaintance with the Saviour in the days of his humiliation, they were chearfully disposed to confess and acknowledge him as a King, and their King in particular. This we see was the case with Nathanael, John i. 49. "Nathanael answered, and said unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel."

4. Christ was set forth to the Church by the Prophets, as a King, under the Old Testament dispensation. Jacob tells us, the sceptre of Judah was to terminate in him, Gen. xlix. 10. "The sceptre," saith he, "shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until *Shiloh* come." And as he was set forth to the faith of the Church in the character of a King by prophecy; he was likewise set forth in that character by a variety of typical persons, acting in the station of kings, such as David, Solomon, Melchisedec, &c.

5. This truth is evident from the kingly titles and epithets we find given him in Scripture. He is called the *Prince of peace*, the *blessed and only Potentate*, the *King of Kings*, and *Lord of Lords*. There are many who practically deny him to be a King now, and upon the matter say, *We will not have this man to reign over us*: But the great and notable day is hastening on, when every tongue shall be made to confess, that *Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father*, Phil. ii. 11.

Lastly,

Lastly, That Jesus Christ is a King, will appear from the kingly prerogatives, and badges of royalty, which we find ascribed to him in the word of God. He is called *the Anointed*, Psalm lxxxix. 20. We read of his kingdom and his crown, Cant. iii. 11. "Go forth O daughters of Zion, "and behold King Solomon with the crown "wherewith his mother crowned him, in the day "of his espousals:" We read of his sceptre, and his throne, verses 6, 9. of this psalm: We read of his Ambassadors, who are Ministers of the gospel: We read of his revenue, which is the praises of his people, Psal. lxxv. 1. And we read of the treasures of his kingdom, which comprehended all the riches of grace and glory, Eph. iii. 8. "Unto me," saith the Apostle Paul, "who am "less than the least of all saints, is this grace gi- "ven, that I should preach among the Gentiles, "the unsearchable riches of Christ."

It was proposed *secondly* on this head, To shew that Jesus Christ is *the King*, and that by way of eminence and excellency. And,

1. He is so in respect of his person: All other kings are but men, whose foundation in their best estate is in the dust; but this King is the *mighty God*, Isa. ix. 6. "The brightness of his Fa- "ther's glory, and the express image of his "person," Heb. i. 3. He is God and man in one Divine person. All other kings were made by him; their hearts are in his hand, and he turneth them as the rivers of water whithersoever he pleaseth.

2. He is a most ancient King: All other kings compared with him, are but of yesterday; he is the *Ancient of days*, Micah v. 2. Even as King and Head of the Church, he was *set up from everlasting*, Prov. viii. 23. "I," saith he, "was set "up

“up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever
“the earth was.”

3. He is most singularly qualified for the management of his kingdom; *All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hid in him*, Col. ii. 3. He is infinitely powerful, being God equal with the Father, and Holy Spirit; and as Mediator, he exercises a delegated power from the Father, that reacheth to heaven, earth, and hell, Matth. xxviii. 18. He is such a King, as has all his subjects ever under his eye: Every case and circumstance about them is perfectly well known unto him. He knows all their needs and wants; yea, the secret groans of their hearts are not hid from him, Psal. xxxviii. 9. And as he knows most perfectly what condition every one of his subjects is in, he is able to do whatever the case calls for at his hand. For he is “mighty to save, and that to the uttermost, all
“who come unto God by him.”

4. He is a most righteous King; he governs both his essential and mediatorial kingdoms with the strictest justice and equity. *He reigns in righteousness, and rules in judgment*, Isa. xxxii. 1. He not only doth righteously, but he bears a most perfect love to righteousness, and hates all iniquity with a most perfect hatred. Psal. xlv. 7. “Thou lovest
“righteousness and hatest iniquity.” He is girt about with faithfulness; it is the girdle of his loins, Isa. xi. 5. “Righteousness shall be the girdle of his
“loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.” His ways are all equal: “He judgeth the poor with
“righteousness, and reproveth with equity for the
“meek of the earth,” Isa. xi. 4. “He is the holy
“One in the midst of Israel, just in all his ways,
“and holy in all his works. A God of truth,
“without iniquity, just and right is he.”

5. He is a most rich and opulent King. As God

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equal

equal with the Father, he is *Lord of all*: The earth is his, and the fulness thereof: He made all things, and by him all things consist. John i. 3.

"All things were made by him; and without him "was not any thing made that was made." And, saith the Apostle to the Colossians, chap. i. 16.

"By him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible,

"whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: All things were created

"by him, and for him." And as Mediator of the New Covenant, all things are given into his hand

by the Father, Matth. xi. 27. "All the riches of "grace and glory are treasured up in him," Eph.

iii. 8. "It hath pleased the Father that in him "should all fulness dwell." And out of his riches

and fulness, he enriches all his true subjects. Hence says he, Prov. viii. 18, 19, 21. "Riches

"and honour are with me; yea, durable riches "and righteousness. My fruit is better than gold,

"yea, than fine gold; and my revenue than choice "silver.—That I may cause those that love me to

"inherit substance; and I will fill their treasures."

6. He is a singularly blessed and happy King. *The blessed and only Potentate*, 1 Tim. vi. 15. He

accounts himself happy in his subjects, and they are inexpressibly blessed and happy in him: Hence they

do, as they justly may, *blest themselves in him; and in him they glory*. Isa. xlv. 25. "In the Lord

"shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall "glory." He is most blessed in himself, being

possessed of all possible perfection. And as Mediator, the Father hath made him most blessed, Psal.

xxi. 6. "Thou hast made him most blessed for "ever; thou hast made him exceeding glad with

"thy countenance." This glorious King, had once his day of grief and sorrow, Isa. liii. 3. but now

he

he sees the travel of his soul, and is satisfied. He remembereth the anguish no more, for joy that a seed, numerous as the dew that falleth from the womb of the morning, is again restored to the grace and favour of God, upon the footing of what he hath done and suffered.

7. Zion's King is immortal, and therefore eternal. All other kings are but of yesterday, and must die like other men. Death finds its way into the most stately palace, and will not suffer men to live here. But of this King it is witnessed, that *he liveth*, 1 Tim. i. 17. It is true, he died that he might purchase his kingdom; but even when he was put to death in the flesh, he was still alive in his Divine person, which is altogether incapable of pain, perturbation, or suffering. And though it was necessary he should suffer and die as our Surety, and as a corn of wheat fall into the earth and die, that he might not abide alone. He is now alive to see his seed; death hath no more dominion over him. And this is a never-failing source of consolation to all his true subjects. Hence says he to the beloved Disciple, Rev. i. 18. "Fear not, I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."

8. He is a most gracious, loving, and affectionate King. *The Lord God, merciful and gracious*, is his name, and everlasting memorial, Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7. This is that name which he reckons his glory. He bears much and long with his enemies; has declared, even with an oath, that he has no delight in their ruin and destruction. He waits that he may be gracious unto them, by blotting out their transgressions as a thick cloud, and as a cloud their sin. He bears much with the folly and weakness of his true subjects; pities, and sympathises with them as

36 *The Things concerning Zion's King,*

a father under all their trials, and lays no burden upon them, but what he gives them strength to bear, 2 Cor. xii. 9. He lines their yoke with love, that it may not gall the neck. And by commanding their strength according to their day, he makes his yoke always easy, and his burden light.

Lastly, He is a most glorious King; yea, he is the *King of glory*. He is not only glorious in himself, but he is the Lord of all that glory, that is bestowed upon saints and angels. *The King of glory*, is a designation we find thrice given him in Psal. xxiv. And he may justly be called the *King of glory*, as he is the author of glory, and the purchaser of glory. Heaven and eternal glory is a purchased possession, Eph. i. 14. and he is the purchaser. He is the preparer of glory for all his true subjects; hence says he to the Disciples John xiv. 2. "I go to prepare a place for you." He is the bestower of glory upon all the heirs of promise; hence says he to his Disciples, Luke xxii. 29. "I appoint;" or I dispoise "unto you a kingdom, as "my Father hath appointed unto me:." Unto him the Apostle Paul had his eye for the crown of immortal glory; hence says he, 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8. "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up "for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, "the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: "And not to me only, but unto all them also that "love his appearing." And as the King is possessed of all these, and many such like amiable qualifications and excellencies, so they are all in him, without the least shadow of change. Heb. i. 10, 11, 12. "And thou, Lord, in the beginning, hast "laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: They shall perish, but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old

“ old as doth a garment ; and as a vesture shalt
 “ thou fold them up, and they shall be changed ;
 “ but thou art the same, any thy years shall not
 “ fail.”

II. We now proceed to mention some things which concern the King, and are here said to be *good matters* in the esteem of his people. And, in general, it may be observed here, That the King himself, and every thing belonging to him, are precious and highly esteemed by all his true subjects. But more particularly, 1. The glory and excellency of the King's person, is a matter much set by in the esteem of all his true subjects. It is the person of Christ, as *Immanuel God-man*, that the believing soul is chiefly taken up with. The personal glory and excellency of Christ, is what renders every other thing in and about him precious to the heaven-born soul. There are many who, could they enjoy some of the benefits Christ has purchased, would set light by his person ; but this is not the case with the true believer. The Apostle Paul earnestly desired first to know Christ in his person, and then Christ crucified ; hence says he, 1 Cor. ii. 2. “ I determined not to know any
 “ thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him
 “ crucified.” And again says he, Phil. iii. 10. “ That I may know him.” Christ in his person, is the object of the believer's contemplation, and highest commendation. The language of all true believers is, through grace, the same with that which we have John i. 14. “ The Word was made flesh,
 “ and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the
 “ glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full
 “ of grace and truth.” And with that of the Psalmist, Psal. lxxiii. 25. “ Whom have I in hea-
 “ ven but thee ? and there is none upon the earth
 “ that I desire besides thee.”

2. The love of Christ; the love of a three one God in him, is truly a good matter to believers. Their life lies in his favour, and his loving kindness is better than life. The great love wherewith he loved them, when they were dead in trespasses and sins; and which he has so richly manifested by striking hands with justice from eternity, as their Surety; by his taking upon him their nature, and fully answering all the demands of the law and justice of God, in their room and stead; is what they put the highest value upon, 1 John iii. 16. "Here-
 "by perceive we the love of God, because he
 "laid down his life for us." And we see how highly the spouse prizes his love, when she says, Cant. viii. 6, 7. "Set me as a seal upon thine
 "heart, as a seal upon thine arm; for love is
 "strong as death; jealousy is cruel as the grave;
 "the coals thereof are coals of fire, which have
 "a most vehement flame. Many waters cannot
 "quench love, neither can the floods drown it:
 "If a man would give all the substance of his house
 "for love, it would utterly be contemned." The love of Christ to his people, being in itself ever the same, is a never-failing source of consolation to them. And when they can, with any measure of clearness, discern their interest in it, it sweetens every trying dispensation of Providence they can possibly be trusted with. Knowing that no trial nor adversary whatever can separate them from the love of Christ, Rom. viii. 35. "Who shall se-
 "parate us from the love of Christ?"

3. The righteousness of our Lord Jesus is a good matter to believers. This righteousness consists in the holiness of his human nature, the perfect uprightness of his life, and the complete satisfaction he has made to the justice of God for our offences, by his sufferings and death.

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This perfect righteousness is indeed a good matter to the children of the King. For it is the righteousness of God, Rom. i. 17. A righteousness wrought out in their stead, Matth. xx. 28. "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many," or, "in the stead of the many." It is a righteousness in which they are exalted, Psal. lxxxix. 16. Exalted beyond the reach of the law-curse; delivered from the guilt and power of sin, the tyranny of Satan, the sting of death, the power of the grave, and the wrath to come. And not only is the believer set beyond the reach of all these evils, being interested by faith in this righteousness, but it is also the immoveable ground and foundation, both of his present access into the grace and favour of God, and his being brought in due time to the full enjoyment of him as the never-failing portion of his cup, and the lot of his inheritance.

4. The fulness of Christ is a good matter to believers. "The fulness of the God-head dwells in him bodily," that is, "really and substantially," whereas, it only dwelt in the earthly sanctuary in a typical and symbolical manner, Coloss. i. 9, Whoever sees the Son by faith, sees the Father in him. There is a fulness of grace in Christ suitable to the wants and necessities of his people; "for in him it hath pleased the Father that all fulness should dwell." And, saith the Psalmist, when speaking to him, Psal. xlv. 2. "Grace is poured into thy lips," yea, "he is full of grace and truth," John i. 14. There is a fulness of all saving offices in him; hence saith the Apostle to the Corinthians, 1 Cor. i. 30. "Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification,"
"and

“and redemption.” There is in him a fulness of power and authority for performing every one of the duties belonging to these several offices. Hence says he to his Disciples, Matth. xxviii. 18. “All power in heaven and in earth is given unto me.” And to the Father he saith concerning himself, John xvii. 2. “Thou has given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.” However many the spiritual wants are, which the believer finds daily recurring upon him, he has a sufficient fulness in his Head to supply them all. Hence saith the Apostle to the Colossians, and in them, to all who believe in Christ, chap. ii. 10. “Ye are complete in him, who is the Head of all principality and power.”

5. The prosperity and success of his kingdom is a good matter to all his true subjects. They delight to see the crown of his mediatorial-glory flourishing upon his head, in the conversion of sinners, and the building up of the saints in their most holy faith. They pray for the prosperity of Zion, and love them who seek her welfare. They seek not their own, but the things that are Jesus Christ's. They love the habitation of his house, because it is the place where his honour dwells; where his glory is to be seen, and the power of his grace experienced. All his ordinances, all his truths; the doctrine of his holy word, the discipline of his house, and the form of government he has appointed in it; are all precious in their eye, because they all bear the stamp of his authority.

6. All his commandments are good matters to his people. The commandments of Christ are grievous to carnal men; they endeavour “to break his bands, and cast his cords from them,”

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Pfal. ii. 3. They seem to delight in trampling his authority under their feet. But the true believer, though he finds much remaining backwardness in his heart, to yield obedience to the law of God, he nevertheless delights in it, after the inward man, that is, so far as renewed by grace, Rom. vii. 22. Christ has set all his true subjects free from the law as a Covenant of Works, having, as their Surety, fulfilled it for them, Rom. viii. 4. And being, as to them, thus divested of its covenant form, it is given to them as the rule of their obedience; and being put into their mind, and written in their hearts, Heb. viii. 10. it is turned, as it were, into a living and operative principle within them; and they are kindly moved and carried forward in their obedience to it, from love to the Lawgiver, springing from faith in him. Hence, they not only yield obedience to the law, but do it with pleasure and delight. Psal. cxix. 32. "I will run the way of thy commandments when thou shalt enlarge my heart."

7. The very cross of Christ; all the tribulations, and calamities, which they are at any time called to endure for his name's sake, are accounted good matters by his true followers. Yea, in so far as they are suitably exercised, they rejoice in their sufferings for Christ. Hence it is said of the Disciples, when shamefully maltreated by the Jewish council, Acts v. 41. "They departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name." And the Apostle to the Hebrews tells us, chap. xi. 26. "That Moses esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt."

8. and lastly on this head, What the King himself is to his people, what he has done for them, what he has wrought in them, and what they yet

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expect from him, are all good matters in their esteem. His true subjects have already received abundance of grace, and the gift of righteousness, Rom. v. 17. And shall reign in life by Jesus Christ. Accordingly, the Apostle tells us in the second verse of the same chapter, That believers have their standing in grace, "and are rejoicing in the hope of glory."

III. The *third* head in the method, was, to give the reasons of the doctrine; or shew, whence it is that the things concerning the King are viewed, as matters truly good, by all who believe in him. And they are so, for these reasons,

1. Because of the great love and regard believers have for the King himself. He is incomparably precious and excellent to those who believe, however much despised and slighted by the greatest part of the world. Hence saith the Apostle, 1 Peter ii. 7. "Unto you, therefore, who believe he is precious." Christ is the pearl of great price, for which the believer is powerfully, though kindly, determined to part with all he hath, in the day of regeneration and conversion. Hence says our Lord, Matth. xiii. 45, 46, "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant-man seeking goodly pearls; who, when he had found one pearl of great price, he went and sold all that he had, and bought it." The regard the believer has for Christ, puts a peculiar beauty and comeliness upon every thing belonging to him, in his esteem; upon his word, his works, his grace, and fulness. Hence says the spouse, in answer to the question proposed to her by the daughters of Jerusalem, Cant. v. 9. "What is thy beloved more than another beloved?—His mouth is most sweet; yea, he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved,"
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"and this is, my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem."

2. Because there is a real worth and excellency in all these things, which concern this glorious King. They are suited to give satisfaction to the soul. Earthly things in the greatest abundance, cannot fully satisfy the eye; far less the heart. But every thing in Christ, is of a soul-satisfying quality. Accordingly the spouse tells us, "She sat down under his shadow with great delight," "and his fruit was sweet to her taste," Cant. ii. 3. There is an unspeakable sweetness and excellence in the love of Christ. "How excellent is thy loving-kindness, O God!" saith the Psalmist, Psal. xxxvi. 7. There is an excellence in his righteousness, inconceivably greater than in that of innocent Adam, or the Angels whose primitive glory and beauty was never stained: For it is the righteousness of God, Rom. viii. 3. In a word, every thing belonging to this King, is replete with substantial, solid and lasting goodness; and therefore, is justly reckoned a good matter by his true friends and followers.

3. The things which concern Christ, are good matters to believers; because they have eyes to discern the value and excellency of divine things. What our Lord said to his Disciples, holds true, in some measure, in the case of every one of his real subjects, Matth. xiii. 16. "Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear." The reason so few are in love with Christ and divine things, is, because they see them not; their eyes are blinded by their own natural corruption, and Satan, the god of this world. But every true believer is blessed with such a knowledge of Christ, and the things concerning him, as flesh and blood cannot give, Matth. xvi. 17. The face
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of the covering he was under is destroyed; and the thick vail of ignorance taken off his understanding, Isa. xxv. 9. so that he sees the King in his beauty, with the things which concern him, in the light of the Holy Spirit, shining upon his own word, according to his promise, John xvi. 14. "He shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine, and shew it unto you."

4. and *lastly*, The true subjects of Zion's King, account the things concerning him good matters, because the King himself is theirs, and they are his, Cant. ii. 16, "My beloved," saith the believing soul, "is mine, and I am his." In virtue of this near, intimate and never-failing relation between Christ and believers, they are both deeply interested in the concerns of each other. The conjugal relation the believer stands in to Christ, entitles him to all that is his, 1 Cor. iii. 22, 23.—"All is yours; and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." All things concerning Christ make for the real benefit and advantage of his people. His attributes and perfections, are as a wall of fire round about them, for their preservation and defence. His promises are for their consolation; his precepts for their direction; and every dispensation of his Providence, must work for their good in the issue. Hence saith the Apostle, Rom. viii. 28. "We know that all things work together for good, to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

IV. The last thing in the method, was, to make some improvement of the subject. And the first use of the doctrine may be of information.

1. We may see from this subject, the amazing condescension of the *great God our Saviour*; in submitting to exercise a variety of offices, for the spiritual good and advantage of perishing sinners.

of mankind. His love and grace have brought him to stoop so very low, as to give his life for rebels against heaven; become a guide to the blind, and the opener of the prison to them who are bound. Let us all believe, and wonder at this condescension, with thankful acknowledgments of the Divine goodness therein manifested: *Though our Lord Jesus was rich, for our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich.*

2. We may see one special difference between the true believer and the hypocrite. Hypocrites may assent to the truth of many things taught in the word concerning Christ; but they have no love to his person, nor can they have any heart-affection to things touching him. They do not take things concerning Christ home to themselves, as good things to them in particular. Whereas the believer does not only assent to the truth of the Divine Testimony respecting Christ, but embraces the things revealed concerning him, as most good and excellent in themselves, and good for them in particular. They desire and value them above all other things whatsoever, Phil. iii. 8. "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord." Whatever value the people of God may put upon their temporal comforts, in comparison, they esteem them all as loss and dung, when they stand in competition with Christ, and things concerning him.

3. See suitable exercise for the children and people of God. It is to meditate much upon Christ; his person, offices, grace and fulness; particularly, they should give themselves much to meditation upon his kingly office; the glory of his kingdom, with the justice and equity of his government. These things called up the Psalmist's particular attention; his heart was engaged in meditating upon them.

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My heart is inditing a good matter : I speak of the things I have made touching the King. There is much consolation to be experienced, in the believing contemplation of the kingly office of Christ : It is by the exercise of it, the Church is preserved in the world, and restraining bounds set to the wrath, rage and fury of all her enemies.

4. We may see when it is persons can speak suitably concerning Christ, and the things of Christ. Why, it is when their hearts are in some measure filled with his grace. All suitable exercise about Christ and divine things, must begin at the heart. *My heart, saith the Psalmist, is inditing a good matter touching the King.* He believed, and therefore spoke ; so did the Apostles, 2 Cor. iv. 13. Let each of us in our places and stations, be concerned to follow their example, for all profitable speaking about Christ, is the language of faith.

5. We may see matter of terror to all the enemies of Zion's King. And should it be asked, Who are Christ's enemies? we answer, all in a natural state and condition are his enemies ; yea, the carnal mind is enmity against him in the very abstract, Rom. viii. 7. All those are his enemies, who have not been determined by grace to submit to his righteousness. Whoever they are, who seek righteousness by the works of the law, they are endeavouring to frustrate the grace of God ; and are as really enemies to our Lord Jesus, as the open violators of the divine law. Prophaners of God's holy name, Sabbath-breakers, despisers of the word and ordinances of God, and mockers at religion and seriousness, are all among the black herd of Christ's enemies. And our Lord Jesus does not reckon these his only enemies, who openly trample his authority under their feet, and set their mouths against the heavens in their blasphemous talk, saying
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on the matter, "Our lips are our own, and who is "Lord over us?" But he accounts all those his enemies, who are luke-warm, careless and indifferent, whose interests prevail in the world, his, or Satan's. Some may be ready to think, if they do nothing against Christ by openly opposing his work in the Church, they cannot be reckoned his enemies. But if there be any of you so minded, listen to what he says, Matth. xii. 30. "He that is not "with me, is against me; and he that gathereth "not with me, scattereth abroad." Now, they are in a most dangerous condition, who are enemies to Christ: All who hate him, love death. And though he may bear long with his enemies, his hand will find them out at last, Psalm xxi. 8. "Thine hand shall find out all thine enemies: "Thy right hand shall find out those that hate "thee." Yet a little while, and he shall appear in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory; giving charge concerning all his enemies, in a most tremendous manner, saying, Luke xix. 27. "But those mine enemies, that would not "that I should reign over them, bring them forth "and slay them before me."

The *second* use of the doctrine, may be of trial and examination. It is the indispensable duty of every hearer of the gospel, capable of reflecting upon the frame and exercise of his own heart, seriously to put the matter to the trial, Whether he is really one of the true subjects of Zion's King, or not? And, for your help, in this important enquiry, we may ask you a few questions.

1. What views have you got of your natural state and condition? Have you seen it to be a state of sin and wrath, a state of captivity and bondage? All the subjects of Christ, were once the vassals and slaves of Satan, the god of this world, the spirit

spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience, Eph. ii. 3. And, when our Lord Jesus comes to deliver the captive exile, and take the prey from the mighty, he lets the man see the sinfulness of his condition, with the danger to which he is exposed, by reason of his sin. And, the mean he makes use of for that end, is the word of the law, for by it is the knowledge of sin. Hence saith the Apostle Paul, Rom. vii. 9. "I was alive once without the law : But when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." As if he had said, I once thought myself to be in a very good condition, standing fair for eternal life ; but alas ! I was then destitute of the true knowledge of God's holy law. So soon as it came home upon my conscience by the energy of the Spirit, the natural depravity of my heart, which was before, in comparison, like one dead, began to revive and exert itself with such impetuosity, as effectually convinced me, I was dead in trespasses and sins, and liable to the revenging wrath of God for ever.

2. Did ever this glorious King reveal his powerful arm to you, thereby making you heartily willing to renounce your own, and submit to his righteousness ? saying, "In the Lord have I righteousness and strength," Isa. xlv. 24. And are you willing to be indebted to him, not only for righteousness, as the ground of your justification and acceptance before God, but likewise to deny yourselves, take up the cross, and follow him ?

3. Do you love Christ ? Can you say to himself, Thou knowest that I love thee ? All his true subjects love him. "The virgins love thee," says the spouse, Cant. i. 3. "They love him because he first loved them," 1 John iv. 19. And their love to him discovers itself, in hearty grief and sorrow, because they cannot love him in a more

more intense and ardent manner than they do.

4. Do you love your fellow subjects? Are those who bear the image of your King, the excellent ones of the earth in your esteem, whatever be their condition in the present world? Mutual love among the subjects of Christ, is one of the special marks of their relation to him, 1 John iii. 14. "Hereby we know that we are passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."

5. Have you a prevailing desire, and concern, for the success and prosperity of God's work in the Church? Does the low state of religion at this day, both in the Church, and the hearts of believers, bring you often to the throne of his grace, to plead with him for a revival to his work? agreeable to the exhortation we have, Isa. lxii. 6, 7. "Ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence; and give him no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth."

6. and *lastly*, Is the opposition that still remains in your own hearts to this glorious King, with the many dishonours done him in the world, about you, matter of grief and sorrow to you? Can you really adopt the language of the Psalmist, Psal. cxxxix. 21, 22. "Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate thee? And am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee? I hate them with perfect hatred; I count them mine enemies."

These are a few of the marks, by which you may try yourselves, whether or not you are translated from the power of darkness, into the kingdom of God's dear Son.

The *last* use of the doctrine, shall be in a word of exhortation, *first*, to the subjects of Christ; and *secondly*, to his enemies.

First then, We exhort you who are the true
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subjects of Jesus Christ the King, to bless God for sending his Son into the world to be your King, and determining your hearts to accept of him, by faith, *as made of God to you, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption.* Divine grace and sovereignty are richly displayed, in bringing some to submit to his righteousness and sceptre, while others are left to despise his grace, and contemn his authority.

2. Trust in your glorious King; this is your duty at all times, and in every circumstance, Psal. lxii. 8. "Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your hearts before him: God is a refuge for us." Trust him with the down-bringing of all your spiritual enemies, and the perfecting whatever concerns you, in this world, in heaven, or in your own souls. Say with the Psalmist in the language of faith, Psal. cxxxviii. 8. "The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me." The more you trust in your King, the more you honour him, and the more will your own souls be established and comforted.

3. Be glad and rejoice in your King. However many trials and discouragements you have, or may be trysted with in the wilderness of this world, you have still ground to be glad and rejoice in him. In his love, wisdom, power, faithfulness, all-sufficiency, and immutability. *He is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.* The same, not only in himself, but likewise in his love to you. Let the spiritual Israel therefore, *rejoice in him that made him; and the children of Zion be joyful in their King.*

4. Be concerned to grow in acquaintance with your King, 2 Pet. iii. 18. "Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." The only way to grow in grace, to have grace strengthened and encreased, is to grow
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in the knowledge of Christ. Attend with diligence to all the means of divine appointment, for promoting your acquaintance with him. Be much in the duty of secret prayer, meditation, self-examination, searching the scriptures, and make conscience of waiting on him in public ordinances. In these you may expect to see him, and enjoy communion with him, in virtue of his own promise, Cant. iv. 6. "Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, I will get me to the mountain of myrrh, and to the hill of frankincense."

5. and *lastly*, Seek to have the declarative glory of your King advanced in your day and generation. Be concerned to act faithfully for him, according to your places and stations in the world; cleaving to all his truths, and ordinances, with faith, love, and heart-affection; rowing against the stream of error, profanity, backsliding and apostacy from once attained Reformation, wherewith these lands are filled. The more men make void the laws of your King, the more you ought, and through grace, the more you will evidence your love to them, Psal. cxix. 126, 127. "They have made void thy law: Therefore I love thy commandments above gold, yea, above fine gold."

Secondly, We exhort all the enemies of this glorious King, to relinquish the camp of Satan, and come over to Christ's standard. *Kiss ye the Son lest he be angry*: Embrace him with a kiss of faith, homage, and subjection. And for motives consider,

1. While you refuse to submit to his righteousness, you are in a state of the vilest slavery and bondage. Satan rules in your hearts, Eph. ii. 3. you are lying among the pots of spiritual Egypt, Psal. lxxviii. 13. The devil's drudges and bondmen.

2. Our Lord Jesus, the King, is your right-ful

ful Lord and Sovereign. Satan is but an usurper ; none but Christ has a right to the throne of your hearts ; and he comes in the dispensation of the gospel, making a demand upon you for it ; saying to each of you, *My son, give me thine heart.*

3. There is no possible way for you to escape from the curse of the broken law, and the wrath to come, but your uniting with Christ by faith. What he long since said to the Jews, he is presently declaring to you, *If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.*

4. However long you have slighted the offers of his grace, he is still waiting that he may be gracious to you : The banner of his love is set up in the gospel, and he calls you to come under it. His sceptre of grace is stretched out, and he invites you to take hold of it. Yea, he is not only calling you to do so, but promising also, that such as you are, shall do it. For it is written in the Prophets, “ There shall be a root of Jesse, that shall stand “ for an ensign of the people ; to it shall the Gen- “ tiles seek, and his rest shall be glorious.” Pray for the spirit of faith, to enable you to believe the promise, with particular application, each one for himself ; so that you may be in case to say to him whom God hath raised up to reign over the Gentiles, as did Amasai to David, 1 Chron. xii. 18. “ Thine are we, David, and on thy side, thou son “ of Jesse.” And, being brought to this exercise, the King himself will be incomparably precious in your esteem, and you will think and *speak of the things concerning him*, with pleasure and delight.

S E R M O N . III.

CHRIST JESUS, the Bridegroom of the Church, fairer than the Children of Men, having Grace poured into his Lips.

PSAL. xlv. 2.

Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into thy lips; therefore God hath blessed thee for ever.

THE person described in these words, is JESUS CHRIST, the King and Head of the Church. In the preceding verse, the Psalmist proposed to speak of him, and the things concerning him. And here he speaks to him, in a high commendation of his glory and beauty. The more we think upon Christ, and speak of him, in a believing manner, the more will our hearts be drawn out in love to him, and desire after him. The Psalmist, having been favoured with a stayed view of the King in his beauty, admitted to behold him both as God equal with the Father and Holy Spirit, and as God-man Mediator, was laid under a pleasant necessity to go and tell him, that for his part he was heartily pleased with him, and that all the sons of men have cause to be of the same mind. *Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into thy lips; therefore God hath blessed thee for ever.*

In which words, more particularly,

1. We have a description of Christ's person; *Thou art fairer than the children of men*, saith the Psalmist. Our Lord Jesus is fair and beautiful absolutely. And in a comparative view, *fairer than the children of men*. There is infinitely more real worth,

worth, beauty and excellency in him, than is to be found in all the men of the world together. *He is the chief among ten thousands, the Rose of Sharon, and as the Apple-tree among the trees of the wood. He is fairer than all the children of men,* who were ever employed to exercise any office in the Church, and who are the *children of men* principally intended in the text. He is fairer than all the prophets and teachers of the Church; fairer than the priests who served in the worldly sanctuary; fairer than those kings God raised up to rule over Israel. Aaron had garments for glory and beauty; but our Lord Jesus is far more glorious in his apparel. Many whom God has been pleased to employ in the Church, have done virtuously; but he excels them all. In all things he hath the pre-eminence, Coloss. i. 18. When the Apostle would bring off the Hebrews from their fond conceit of Moses and Aaron, whom they were opposing to Christ, he calls them to the serious consideration of his person and offices, Heb. iii. 1. "Consider," saith he, "the Apostle and high Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus." If you rightly consider him, would the Apostle say, you will see he is infinitely better than Moses and Aaron both. The Apostle readily grants, elsewhere, "that Moses was faithful in all God's house as a servant;" which is a very high character indeed; but Christ is faithful as a Son over his own house. Moses was but a servant in the house; but Christ is the Son over his own house. The house is his, and all the office-bearers in it, are but servants under him; and to him they are accountable for every piece of their service: It is with him they have to do.

2. We may observe wherein it is, that much of Christ's beauty and excellency consists, and that is in his having grace poured into his lips; *grace is poured*

poured into thy lips, saith the Psalmist. There is a real beauty and excellency in grace, it is the ornament of the soul. Our Lord Jesus is richly furnished for the discharge of every part of his Mediatorial work and office, being *full of grace*, John i. 14. Grace is poured into his lips. Christ, considered as God equal with the Father, is the fountain and well-spring of all grace and glory; altogether incapable of receiving any additional glory or blessedness, being infinitely rich in himself, 2 Cor. viii. 9. But the Psalmist speaks of him here as *God-man Mediator*, and of the endowments bestowed upon him in the human nature, whereby he was enabled to execute all his saving offices, in working out the arduous work of our redemption. JEHOVAH the Father, having constitute him his servant in that great and important business, prepared a body, or human nature for him; and therein richly furnished him with the gifts and graces of the Spirit for the discharge of it.

His furniture for the work, is *grace*, which commonly signifies either the free favour and love of God toward men, or his gracious work upon their hearts by his Spirit in their regeneration and progressive sanctification. The Apostle speaks of grace in the first sense; when he saith, Eph. ii. 8. "By *grace* are ye saved," that is, it is owing solely to the free favour and unmerited kindness of God, that ye are brought into a state of salvation. The word *grace*, is taken in the latter sense, in all these texts where God is said to give or impart grace to men, and where we are exhorted to *grow in grace*, &c. By the grace then, which is said, to be poured into Christ's lips, we are to understand the internal principle of grace and holiness, wherewith his human nature was filled by the Spirit.

The subject of this grace, is the lips of our glorious

56 *Christ Jesus, the Bridegroom of the Church,*
 rious Surety. *Grace is poured into thy lips.* These words have a special respect to Christ in his prophetic office, and intimate one of the chief purposes for which this grace was conferred upon him, viz. that it might by him be communicated to men. It was poured into his lips, that he might pour it into our hearts by his Word and Spirit. The word of promise, in the hand of the Spirit, is the instrument through which he conveys the golden oil of grace into the hearts of his people. The words of his mouth are sweet, *sweeter than honey from the honey-comb. And his lips are like lilies dropping sweet smelling myrrh.* We read of the gracious words which proceeded from his mouth, Luke iv. 22. "All bear him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth."

This grace is bestowed upon Christ in a most ample manner: It is poured into his lips. It is not dropped, but poured, into his lips, in the most abundant manner. There was an immeasurable and unspeakable fulness of grace given to the human nature of our *glorious Immanuel*. God gave not the Spirit unto him by measure, John iii. 34. Every believer receives grace by measure, Eph. iv. 7. "To every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ." But to him it is given without measure. There is an unmeasurable fulness of grace in him, of which all true believers are made partakers. Hence says the Apostle, John i. 16. "Of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace."

3. and lastly, The Psalmist adds, *Therefore, God hath blessed thee for ever.* The particle *therefore*, cannot here be viewed, as denoting the meritorious cause of God his pouring grace into the Redeemer's lips; for that grace is declared to be the free gift

gift of God ; and so the effect, and not the cause of God's blessing him. It may therefore be taken, as setting forth the final cause of God's pouring grace into Christ's lips. And so the sense will be, Because God hath so eminently enriched thee with grace, adorned and qualified thee for rule and government, therefore he hath blessed thee with an everlasting kingdom, and made thee blessings to the sons of men for ever. What is briefly hinted at here, is more fully expressed, ver. 7. of this Psalm, " God, thy God, hath anointed thee with " the oil of gladness above thy fellows."

The *first* observation we take from the words thus explained, is,

Doct. *That our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Bridegroom of the Church, is fairer than the children of men.* " Thou art fairer than the children " of men," &c.

For the further illustration of this truth, see the answer the spouse gives the daughters of Jerusalem, when they ask her, " What is thy beloved more than another beloved," Cant. v. 9. after condescending upon many things, wherein he excels every other beloved, in a tacit acknowledgement that she was not able fully to declare his excellencies; she adds, ver. 16. " His mouth " is most sweet; yea, he is altogether lovely. " This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O " daughters of Jerusalem."

The method we shall observe, in speaking a little to this doctrine, is,

I. To make some general observations, relative to the subject.

II. Enquire in what respects our Lord Jesus is fairer than the children of men.

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III. Apply. And all is proposed under Divine aid and direction.

The *first* thing proposed was, To make some general observations relative to the subject. And,

1. We observe, that in all our enquiries after the knowledge of Christ, the first thing we ought to know and consider, is his person. *Thou art fairer than the children of men*, saith the Psalmist. His design in this Psalm, is to describe the kingdom of Messiah, the Prince of the kings of the earth; with the benefits all his true subjects enjoy from him. But he begins with his person, intimating, that if we know not the person of Christ, we have no real interest in him; nor can we receive any saving advantage by him. All true believers are chiefly concerned to know the Redeemer's person; though they highly value his benefits, and love him, because he loved them, and gave his life a ransom for them. They love and prefer him above all things for his own sake; for the sake of what he is in himself. Hence we see, it was the Apostle's chief aim and desire to know Christ himself, and then "to know him in the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings," Phil. iii. 10. And again says he, 1 Cor. ii. 2. "I determined not to know any thing among you save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." The true believer is chiefly taken up in contemplating the person of Christ by faith; whereas, the formal professor follows him, only for the sake of the advantage he some way expects from him.

2. We observe, there is an ineffable glory and beauty in the person of Jesus Christ. The Psalmist ascribes beauty to him, *Thou art fairer than the children of men*; as if he had said, absolutely, *thou art fair*; and in a comparative view, *fairer than the children of men*. We may justly say concerning the

the glory and beauty of Christ, what the Prophet says touching his generation, Isa. liii. 8. *Who shall declare it?* The beauty and glory of IMMANUEL's person, is original, in and from himself. It is underyived glory and excellency. His beauty is always the same, and subject to no decline. Whatever beauty and glory is in the Father and Holy Spirit, belongs to, and is really in him. "He is the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person," Heb. i. 3. He that sees him, seeth the Father also; for he and the Father are one, John x. 30.; *one*, not only in will, design and operation; but in *nature* and *essence*, as the original word there used, evidently imports. With the greatest propriety then, may we join with the Prophet in holy wonder and admiration, saying, (Zech. ix. 17.) "How great is his goodness, and how great is his beauty!" Our glorious IMMANUEL is the Man God's Fellow, possessed of the same Divine attributes and perfections with the Father. He has the eye of omniscience, and the hand of omnipotence. And what he is, that he is for ever; *for with him there is no shadow of turning*. Now, "as beauty among men consists in the symmetry, and comely proportion of parts;" so the beauty of Christ, considered as the *only begotten of the Father*, or as *God equal with the Father*, "is the infinite harmony, agreeableness, and suitableness of all Divine perfections." He is called *fair*, to denote his glorious perfections.

3. We observe, there are some seasons, wherein our Lord Jesus is pleased to favour believers with more than ordinary clear and distinct views of his glory and beauty. This appears evidently to have been the case with the Psalmist, when he composed this Psalm: He speaks as one who had got a steadfast view of the King in his beauty. It

is true, he was under the immediate inspiration and direction of the Holy Spirit, when he had the discovery of the Messiah's glory which he here sets before us; but it is the privilege even of ordinary believers, at some times, to be favoured with more than ordinary heart-ravishing and soul-comforting views of the person and glory of Christ. There are certain seasons, in which our Lord Jesus is pleased signally to manifest forth his glory, and enable his Disciples to believe on him, John ii. 11. He ordinarily does so in the day of conversion; the pleasant month of renewed manifestations, after a long and dark night of desertions; when they are called to suffer for his sake; when deeply engaged in secret prayer, meditation, self-examination, &c. And sometimes he gives believers very clear views of his glory, about the time of their departure from the present world; this we find was the case with the royal Psalmist, 2 Sam. xxiii. 5.; old Simeon, Anna the Prophetess, &c. But, though these are some of the seasons, wherein he most ordinarily makes his glory to pass before his true Disciples, we are still to remember, he lets out these manifestations of himself, in a sovereign manner, and often when they are least expected by believers.

4. We observe, that a believing view of Christ in the beauty and glory of his person, throws a veil over all created excellency. *Thou art fairer than the children of men*, says the Psalmist: When the beauty of Christ is seen by the eye of faith, it appears altogether matchless and incomparable. There is none like Christ among the sons of the mighty; and the longer his beauty is beheld by faith, the more it will be admired. All created excellency is derived from our Lord Jesus as its fountain. All the glory of saints and angels, is
but

but a drop from the ocean of glory that is in him. The nearer we approach the creature, and the more narrowly we search into its excellency, the more defects we find in it, and the more our estimation of it abates ; but the nearer the soul gets to Christ, and the longer it dwells upon the contemplation of his glorious perfections, he appears still the more lovely and desirable. The more that persons are admitted to behold his beauty, they still desire to see the more of it. The one thing the Psalmist desired, was, *That he might dwell in the house of the Lord for ever, and behold his beauty,* Psal. xxvii. 4. Moses enjoyed much sweet intercourse and fellowship with a God in Christ ; and we find, the more he was privileged that way, the more ardent were his desires after further displays of his glory and beauty, *Exod. xxxiii. 18.* " And he said, I beseech thee, shew me thy glory." Lord, would he say, thou hast let me see much of thy glory already, and one special effect of it, which I feel and experience, is an earnest desire to behold it in a more full and perfect manner.

5. and lastly, Those to whom the Lord Jesus has been pleased to manifest his beauty, in a saving manner, may go and tell him, as the Psalmist does, *Thou art fairer than the children of men,* saith he. Yea, they should do it : They should tell him in the way of holy gratitude and thankfulness for his amazing condescension, in shewing them his glory. They should say with that Disciple, John xiv. 22. " Lord, How is it that thou wilt manifest thyself to us, and not unto the world ?" We may view this question, both as expressive of the Apostle's wonder and amazement at the divine condescension, and distinguishing goodness to him and his fellow Disciples, in shewing them his beauty : And his earnest desire to know more perfectly

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perfectly about the Lord's way of manifesting his
glory and excellency to their souls.

II. The *second* thing in the method, was, to en-
quire in what respects our Lord Jesus is *fairer than*
the children of men. And more generally, we ob-
serve,

He is in every respect *fairer than the children of*
men : There is none even among the sons of the
mighty, who may compare with him. Deut. xxxiii.
26. " There is none like the God of Jeshurun,
" who rideth upon the heaven, in the help of his
" people, and in his excellency on the sky." There
is infinitely more worth and excellency in Christ,
than in all the children of men together. His
name alone *is excellent.* Whatever worth and
beauty is to be found with any of the children of
men, it is all derived from him. If any of them
are spiritually fair and comely, they are so only
through his comeliness put upon them. They
have nothing but what they have received from
him. John i. 16, " Of his fulness have all we re-
" ceived, and grace for grace." Our glorious
IMMANUEL, is fairer than all the children of men,
whoever were employed in the Church : Fairer than
Moses, the Old Testament Apostle ; fairer than
Aaron the typical High Priest : And Solomon, in
all his glory, was but a very faint shadow of him.
But more particularly, he is *fairer than the chil-*
dren of men, whether we compare him with men
in general, or those who were employed in the
Church in particular. And that,

1. In the glory and dignity of his person. He
is the express image of his Father's person, Heb.
i. 3. Numerically *one* in nature and essence with
the Father and Holy Spirit. *The mighty God,*
Isa. ix. 6. And says he to the Jews, John x. 40.
I and my Father are one. The most eminent of
the

the children of men, are but men; sinful men, frail and fading flesh; a wind that passeth away, and doth not return. Death will not suffer men to continue here: But our Lord Jesus, in his divine nature, *is over all, God blessed for ever*, Rom. ix. 6. "The everlasting Father, the holy One in the midst of Israel, and without shadow of turning." He is a very wonderful person; he is truly and properly God; thinks *it no robbery to be equal with God*, Philip. ii. 6. And he is truly and properly man; *bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh*, Heb. ii. 14. God and man in one divine person. And though the divine and human natures are inseparably united in his person, each nature retains its own essential properties. When the Son of God became the Son of man, it made no change in his person: Though he became what he once was not, he still continued to be the same that he was: And though his assuming the human nature, made a very great change upon it, being highly dignified and exalted, by virtue of its union with the divine in the person of the Son of God, it still continued to be finite, limited and confined to a certain place.

2. He is *fairer than the children of men*, in respect of that fulness of grace that is poured into his lips. He was anointed in the human nature *with the oil of gladness above his fellows*. There is an inconceivable fulness of grace transferred into the human nature of Christ from the divine, by virtue of the personal union. This grace that is poured into his lips, can never be exhausted. All the saints who have gone before us, have received abundance of grace out of Christ's fulness, and yet he is as full of grace as ever. Fulness, and all fulness still dwells in him, Col. ii. 9. So fair and beautiful is our IMMANUEL, by reason of this fulness of grace, that the beloved Disciple calls it his
glory.

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glory. John i. 14. "The Word was made flesh,
"and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory,
"the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) "
"full of grace and truth." But we may have
occasion afterwards to speak of this grace that
is poured into Christ's lips.

3. He is *fairer than the children of men*, in re-
spect of his work, as the Head and Surety of the
New Covenant. He undertook and finished such
a work, as none of the children of men, none of
the Angelic host, nor all of them together, could
ever have done. He has magnified the divine law,
and made it honourable, by submitting himself to
it, both in its precepts and penalty, Isa. xlii. 21.
Innocent Adam was in case to fulfil the righteous-
ness of the law; and the obedience of Angels, who
kept their first estate, is perfect: But neither men
nor angels could *magnify the law, and make it ho-*
nourable. This is work, which an Omnipotent
arm only was capable to perform. The work
our Lord Jesus has done, was weighty work; glo-
rious and honourable work: *He has done excellent*
things, Isa. xii. 5. He hath finished the work that
was given him to do: Glorified God upon the earth,
where we had so grievously dishonoured him, John
xvii. 4. "Finished transgression, made an end of
"sin, and brought in an everlasting righteous-
"ness," Dan. ix. 24. "He hath destroyed him
"that had the power of death, that is, the devil,"
Heb. ii. 14. Judged the prince of this world and
cast him out. Evacuated his power, and broken
his dominion. "He has swallowed up death in vic-
"tory," Isa. xxv. 8. Procured *life* and *immortality*
for men, and brought them to light by the gospel.

4. He is *fairer than all the children of men*, in
respect of the revelation of God's mind and will
which he has made to men. Christ has made such

a revelation of the will, love and grace of God, as none of the sons of men could do. He alone was able to take the book of God's secret, eternal and gracious purposes of love and kindness towards a lost world; to open the seals of it, and make known its amazing contents. John i. 18. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." And again, says our Lord to the Father, Psal. xl. 10. "I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart: I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation: I have not concealed thy loving-kindness, and thy truth, from the great congregation." He has declared the whole counsel of God; all his gracious designs towards the children of men. All things which the Father shewed him, with a commission to make known to men, he hath most faithfully revealed, John xvii. 8. We have a brief summary of what he had a commission from the Father to declare to us, John vi. 40. "This," says he, "is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: And I will raise him up at the last day."

5. Our Lord Jesus is fair and excellent; *fairer than all the children of men*, if we view him in a relative capacity. There are many endearing relations, in which he stands to his people; and in every one of them, he infinitely excels all the children of men. Among fathers, he is *the everlasting Father*, Isa. ix. 6. Among husbands, the most loving and affectionate; for he gave his life for his spouse, Eph. v. 2. Among brethren, he is *the first-born*. Among friends, *the friend that sticketh closer than a brother*. Is he a Prophet? then he is *the Interpreter, one among a thousand*, Job xxxiii.

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23. Is he a Priest? then he is *the High Priest of our profession*, Heb. iii. 1. Is he a King? He is *the King of kings, and Lord of lords*. "He is higher than Agag, and his kingdom shall be exalted," Numb. xxiv. 7. Among shepherds, he is the Chief; *that great Shepherd of the sheep*, Heb. xiii. 20. Is he a Physician? then he is the Physician both of the soul and the body. The sovereign balm for diseased souls, is his blood and Spirit. He heals all manner of soul-diseases among the people, Psal. ciii. 3. And our temporal, as well as eternal life, is in his hand. He gives the physician his skill, and causes the medicinal herb to spring.

6. and *lastly*, There is an incomparable beauty and excellency in his Name. His name is sweet and favoury. Hence says the spouse, Cant. i. 3. "Because of the favour of thy good ointments, thy name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee." There is safety and protection in his name; it is a strong tower, unto which the righteous run and are safe. A hiding-place, wherein we may elude the narrowest researches of our spiritual enemies, Psal. xxxii. 7. and dwell in safety, when the floods of great waters swell up to the brim. IMMANUEL's Name is truly wonderful; there is something in it suiting every case we can possibly be in. There is in it a covering from the tempest of divine wrath; a stay and support to the soul, in a shaking and trying day; and a sweet and cooling draught of consolation to the conscience, when scorched by the terrors of the fiery law: Hence saith the Prophet concerning Christ, Isa. xxxii. 2. "A man (or *that man*) shall be as an hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water

“water in a dry place; as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.”

III. The *third* head in the method, was, to make some improvement of the subject. And,

The *first* use of the doctrine shall be in a few inferences for information. Is it so as has been said, that our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Bridegroom of the Church, is *fairer than the sons of men*? Then,

1. We may see and be informed, why believers are so much in love with him. The soul of the true believer pants after Christ, “as the hart panteth after the water-brooks, Psal. xlii. 1. The true Christian is sick of love for Christ, Cant. ii. 5. The desire of his soul is towards him: When he hides his face from him, he is sore troubled, Psal. xxx. 7. He glories in the tribulations he is called to suffer for Christ, Rom. v. 3. He prefers a day in the courts of his house, to a thousand any where else, Psal. lxxxiv. 10. He can rejoice in him alone, though deprived of every temporal comfort, Hab. iii. 17, 18. These things appear strange to a carnal world, and even to many who make some profession of religion; and though they do not speak it out, they tacitly put the question to the friends of Christ, *What is thy beloved more than another?* What do you see in Christ, that so much engages your love and affection to him? Well, they have the answer ready, *He is fairer than the children of men.* All true believers have seen the King in his beauty, Isa. xxxiii. 17. And when he is seen by the eye of faith, it is impossible not to love him. 1 Pet. ii. 7. “Unto you therefore which believe, he is precious.”

2. We may see they have great cause and reason to rejoice, unto whom God hath revealed Christ. The world have very dark notions concerning

cerning Christ. There are few comparatively, that know him in a saving manner. Christ in the beauty of his person, suitableness of his offices, and riches of his grace, is hid from the greater part of the wise and prudent, while God is graciously pleased to reveal him to babes, Luke x. 2. So that the babes to whom he is revealed, have unspeakable cause and reason, to rejoice and be glad. The world may reckon them fools; but they are wise indeed, and enriched with the begun enjoyment of eternal life. Hence says our Lord concerning his Disciples, John xvii. 3. "This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."

3. We may see one special mean of taking our hearts and affections off from the vain, transitory and fading things of a present world; and that is, to be much in the contemplation of the glory and excellency of the person of Christ; the fulness of grace that is in him, the suitableness of his saving offices to the case of our souls, with the power and authority he has to put them in execution for the good of his Church and people. When our glorious IMMANUEL is seen by the eye of faith, and the mind stayed on him, the riches, honours, profits and pleasures, kingdoms and crowns of a present world, appear to be but empty things, Heb. xi. 24, 25, 26. "By faith, Moses when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward." And in a following verse, it is said, "He endured, as seeing him who is invisible." He saw God in Christ, as his God and portion, and

and this put him in case not only to contemn the riches and pleasures of the world, but to account the very worst things about Christ, (if we may be allowed the expression,) far preferable to the best things of the world.

4. Is Christ incomparably fair and excellent, and every way suited to fill the hand and heart of faith; Then we may see matter of lamentation, that, tho' he is set before men in the dispensation of the gospel, in the glory of his person, and riches of his grace, there are but few disposed to put honour upon him by believing. He is exactly suited to the case of all; but to the liking of few. It is, alas! too evident, from the life and conversation of many, even of those who hear the gospel, that they look upon him in the same light, with the carnal Jews, namely, as a root springing out of a dry ground. He hath no form nor comeliness in their eye, why they think they should desire him, Isa. liii. 2, 3. He is despised and rejected of men: Men! whom he came to save, and who must be eternally miserable, if they are not savingly interested in him. He is despised and rejected of men who reject and contemn the revelation of God's mind and will, which he has given us in his word. Those would be called *Deists*, or the only men who believe there is a God; but they who deny revealed religion, may, with the greatest propriety, be pronounced *Atheists*, whatever specious names they may arrogate to themselves. The Apostle assures us they have not God, second Epistle of John, ver. 9. "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God: He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son." He is despised by Arians, who deny his proper Deity; deny that he is numerically one in essence with the Father and Holy Spirit.

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Spirit. By Socinians, who deny he had any existence before he was born of the Virgin Mary; and affirm, that he was only a Prophet to teach, and not a Priest to satisfy the justice of God: He is despised by Papists, yea, the whole doctrine of the Romish Church, is levelled against the offices, doctrine and grace of Christ. He is despised by all who do not believe in him, but slight and neglect the testimony of the Holy Spirit concerning him. A holy God is many ways testifying his displeasure with us in this generation; and we have reason to apprehend, the leading ground of his controversy with us, is unbelief, contempt of precious Christ, and the glorious gospel of the blessed God.

5. We may see, that we should not content ourselves, with a general consideration of the beauty and excellency of Christ; but should enter particularly into the consideration of these things in him, wherein he is *fairer than the children of men*. This we find the Psalmist doing here: Thou art not only *fair*, would he say, but *fairer than the children of men*; thy beauty is altogether matchless and incomparable. And we see how deeply the spouse entered into the consideration of the incomparable excellencies of her Beloved, Cant. v. 10. She launched out in his commendation, till she found his beauty and excellency become a river, through which she could not swim, and therefore sums up the commendation of his beauty, in these emphatical words, *He is altogether lovely*.

Secondly, We may improve this doctrine a little in an use of trial examination. Seeing our Lord Jesus is not only incomparably fair and excellent in himself, but likewise in the esteem of all true believers; you ought to be trying yourselves by this mark, whether you be among the number of those who really believe in him, or not. Put this important

important matter to the trial: Examine yourselves whether you be in the faith; whether it has yet pleased God to reveal his Son in you; *Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates*, except ye be yet disapproved.

Can you join with the Psalmist in saying from the heart, *Thou art fairer than the children of men?* It is easy to say as much with the mouth; but what say your hearts as to this matter? Is our Lord Jesus a covering of your eyes, from every other lord and lover? Do you highly esteem the revelation of God's will, which he hath given to the Church? Do your meditations of Christ, and divine things, afford you sweet thoughts? Do you confide in Christ, and solely rely upon his most perfect righteousness, as the ground of your access to, and acceptance with God? And is it the earnest desire of your hearts, to be indebted to Christ, not only for salvation from hell and wrath, but also from sin in its guilt and pollution; and from the very inbeing of it, in due time?

If these things are really to be found in your case, they are hopeful evidences that you have seen the King in his beauty; are passed from death to life, and shall never come into condemnation. And what our blessed Lord once said to Simon Peter, he is as really saying to every believer, Matth, xvi. 17. "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: For flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven."

The *last* use of the doctrine, shall be in a word of exhortation. And,

I. We exhort you who have been admitted to behold the matchless beauty and excellency of our glorious IMMANUEL, to bless and praise a God of infinite love and grace, for giving you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ.

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This is a great and distinguishing blessing. God has given riches, fair and large possessions, kingdoms and crowns to many, to whom he never gave the saving knowledge of his Son.

We exhort you to be much employed in the believing contemplation of Christ, in the glory and beauty of his person, his fulness of grace, his love that passeth knowledge, his righteousness which is your covering from the tempest, and his faithfulness which is your shield and buckler. Consider that it is not only your duty to meditate much upon Christ, but it is the most pleasant and profitable exercise you can be engaged in. The more you are employed this way, the more will your affections be disintangled from a vain, sinful and ensnaring world; the more will your spiritual strength and vigour be encreased; your spiritual stature advanced, and your meetness to be put in the full and complete possession of the inheritance of the saints in light promoted.

2. As for you who never saw any beauty nor comeliness in Christ, why you should desire him. We tell you he is *fairer than the children of men*. Every thing desirable is to be seen in him. And there is nothing in him, but is worthy of your highest valuation and esteem. It is not for want of excellency in Christ, that you see none in him; but because you are destitute of the seeing faculty. Satan, the god of this world, has blinded your eyes, that the light of the glorious gospel of Christ hath not yet shined unto you. Though you enjoy a clear objective revelation of Christ in word and ordinances; till God rend the vail of ignorance that is naturally upon your understandings, you cannot see him. When Christ will make himself savingly known to any man, he both manifests his glory to the person, and gives him the eye of faith to behold

hold it: Hence saith the Apostle, in the name of all true believers, 1 John v. 20. "We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding that we may know him that is true." The Son makes known the Father's name to the men he hath given him out of the world. We exhort you to consider, that your present condition is very melancholy, and affecting. If you live and die unacquainted with Christ, and the things in respect of which he is fairer than the children of men; there is an awful eternity awaiting you. This incomparably beautiful and amiable person, whom ye now despise, and whose grace you undervalue and contemn, will, in a little, *come in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory*: And the Apostle tells you what awful work he is coming upon, with respect to all who know not God, and finally reject Christ, 2 Thess. i. 7, 8, 9. "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty Angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." This awful declaration may well cause the heart of every gospel-despiser to melt, and his ears to tingle. Where will the ungodly, and the sinner appear, when he who is now speaking to us as the meek *Lamb in the midst of the throne*, shall appear as the *Lion of the tribe of Judah*, tearing in pieces his enemies, when none can afford them help? We exhort you to consider, though you cannot for the present say in your experience concerning Christ, *he is fairer than the children of men*; you may yet be brought to adopt that language. Many as unworthy as you, have been made to do it; and the *Lord's hand is not shortened*

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that it cannot save. He is setting himself before
you in the word of grace and promise; and saying
to every one of you, *Behold me, behold me!* And,
while he is calling you to *look to him and be saved;*
he is, for your encouragement, adding, *The eyes of*
the blind shall be opened, Isa. xxxiii. 5. And again,
says he, "In this mountain" (the mountain of gos-
pel ordinances) "the Lord will destroy the face
"of the covering, cast over all people; and the
"vail that is spread over all nations," Isa. xxv. 7.
Be exhorted then, to aim at believing the promise;
and plead with him, that while he is graciously
pleased to make his goodness and beauty to pass
before you in the dispensation of the gospel, he
may be graciously pleased to give you the spiritual
eye to discern them; so will you be in case to say,
from your comfortable experience, *Thou art fairer*
than the children of men: Grace is poured into thy
lips; therefore God hath blessed thee for ever.

S E R M O N IV.

PSAL. xlv. 2.

Thou art fairer than the children of men: Grace is
poured into thy lips; therefore God hath blessed
thee for ever.

[The second Sermon on the Text.]

AFTER offering some explication of these words,
the first doctrinal note we observed from them
was,

That our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Bride-
groom of the Church, is fairer than the children of
men. In speaking to this doctrine, the method ob-
served was,

I. To

1. To make some general remarks relative to the subject.

2. To enquire in what respects our Lord Jesus is fairer than the children of men.

3. Apply. Having spoken a little to each of these in order ; we observe a second doctrine from the words.

Doct. *As our Lord Jesus is incomparably fair and excellent, both in himself, and in the esteem of all true believers ; so much of his beauty consists in that fulness of grace which is poured into his lips.*

“Thou art fairer than the children of men : Grace “is poured into thy lips.”

In speaking a little to this doctrine, the following method may be observed, which is,

I. To speak a little of that grace which is poured into Christ's lips.

II. Enquire in what capacity our Lord Jesus hath this grace poured into his lips.

III. Give the reasons of the doctrine ; or shew whence it is, that the grace which is poured into the lips of our glorious Redeemer, is condescended upon as such a leading part of his beauty.

IV. Improve the subject. And all is proposed as the Lord may be pleased to aid and direct.

I. The first thing proposed was, to speak a little of that grace, which is poured into Christ's lips.

Here it may be observed in general, our Lord Jesus Christ did not only receive grace, and all necessary endowments in the human nature, to qualify him for, and carry him through, the arduous work of our redemption ; but he likewise received grace for men ; grace to give out to men, as the Psalmist declares, Psal. lxxiii. 18. “Thou hast a-
“scended

“scended on high ; thou hast led captivity captive :
 “Thou hast received gifts for men ; yea for the
 “rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell
 “among them.” When the Apostle quotes this
 text, Eph. iv. 8. he tells us when our Lord ascend-
 ed up on high, *he gave gifts to men*, informing us
 of the end for which the Psalmist saith, *he received
 gifts for men* ; namely, that he might give them unto
 men. All the grace and glory which any of the sons
 of men have, or shall receive, is lodged in Christ’s
 hand, and given out by him : “In him it hath
 “pleased the Father that all fulness should dwell,”
 Col. i. 19. And, saith JEHOVAH, Psal. lxxxix. 28.
 “My mercy will I keep for him for evermore.”
 All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hid
 in Christ, Col. ii. 3. He is full of grace : Hence
 saith the Apostle, John i. 14. “We beheld his glo-
 “ry, the glory as of the only begotten of the Fa-
 “ther, full of grace and truth.” Such is the ful-
 ness of grace that is in Christ, that believers of all
 ages have received out of it, *and grace for grace*,
 John i. 16. Abundance of grace ; grace for every
 grace we lost in the first Adam : Grace for every
 grace that is in Christ. Grace answering to the
 grace in him, as the impression upon the wax an-
 swers to the seal.

But more particularly, we may here condescend
 upon some of these graces of the Spirit, which
 were poured into the lips of our glorious Redeem-
 er, and shone forth in the most perfect and illustri-
 ous manner, in the whole course of his obedience
 and sufferings. And,

1. The Spirit of the Lord rested upon him (as
 the Prophet Isaiah speaks) as a spirit of wisdom,
 counsel, and understanding, Isa. xi. 2, 3. Wis-
 dom and knowledge discovered themselves in him,
 to the astonishment of his greatest enemies, Mark

vi. 2. "He began to teach in the synagogue: and many hearing him were astonished, saying, From whence hath this man these things? And what wisdom is this which is given unto him, that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands?" And we see him when *only* twelve-years of age, sitting in such manner, among the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions, that all who heard him were amazed, Luke ii. 47. "And all who heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers."

2. The Spirit of the Lord rested upon him, as the Spirit of faith and trust in God. The grace of faith was eminently displayed, and manifested by him, even in the darkest hour, Matth. xxvii. 46. Though he was under the most pressing load of grief, sorrow and sufferings, and denied the comfort of the relation he stood in to God, as his God and Father; yet having the Father's promise of support and through-bearing in his work, Psal. lxxxix. 21, 22. he maintained the claim of faith in God as his God, even when hiding and smiting. A noble example to all his younger brethren, *to trust in the name of the Lord, and stay themselves upon their God*, even when clouds and darkness are round about them.

3. The grace of holy gratitude and thankfulness to God his heavenly Father, evidenced itself in him, in the highest degree of perfection. Hence we find him giving God the praise of his preservation from the womb to the grave, though his birth, life and death were attended with circumstances of more than ordinary abasement, Psal. xxii. 9, 10. "Thou art he that took me out of the womb; thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother's breasts. I was cast upon thee from the womb; thou art my God from my mother's belly." Our Lord Jesus had a mean
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and sorrowful life ; he was a man of sorrows, and intimately acquainted with grief ; nevertheless, so far was he from uttering any complaint, that he abounded in thanksgiving. At the grave of Lazarus, we find him giving thanks to the Father for the countenance he gave him in all his work, John xi. 41. “ Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me, and I know that thou hearest me always.” The night wherein he was betrayed, at the institution of the Sacrament of his supper, when he brake his own body sacramentally, *he gave thanks*, 1 Cor. xi. 24. Gave thanks, that in virtue of the constitution of his person, as God-man Mediator, the commission he had received from the Father, and the abundant furniture he had for the complete discharge of that commission ; he was in case to glorify God in the highest degree ; redeem the nations of them that are saved ; keeping back their lives from the pit, and their souls from the destroyer.

4. Our Lord Jesus evidenced the most cheerful and ready compliance with the will of God, in every part of his work. Yea, so much was his heart set upon the work given him to do, that he accounted the doing of it as his meat and his drink. Hence, says he, John iv. 34. “ My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his works.” When he came under the heaviest wave of all his sea of sufferings, and his holy human nature began, as it were, to shrink, in the prospect of its dissolution, and its dissolution in such an awful manner ; though he prayed against the cup of wrath, saying, *O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me* ; he immediately adds, *nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt*, Matth. xxvi. 39. Frail nature, would he say, recoils at the bitter cup ; but it is the will of my Father, that I take

take it; and therefore, I sink the human in the divine will and pleasure.

5. The graces of humility and self-denial, appear conspicuously in all the sayings and actings of Christ: Hence saith the Apostle Paul, "He made himself of no reputation," Phil. ii. 7. And says the same Apostle, 2 Cor. viii. 9. "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." Tho' our glorious IMMANUEL was infinitely rich, and fairer than the children of men, yet being found in fashion as a man, he acted in the most humble and self-denied manner. He condescended to those of low degree; and his work was for the most part among the poor. He washed his Disciples feet, both as an instance of his great humility, and also to set an example before us, how much we ought to condescend one to another, for our mutual edification. Accordingly, he sets himself forth as our pattern of humility, Matth. xi. 29. "Learn of me" (says he) "for I am meek and lowly in heart;" and saith the Apostle, Rom. xii. 2, 3. "Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification; for even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, the reproaches of them that reproached thee, fell on me."

6. The graces of meekness and patience were most perfectly exercised by our Lord Jesus. *He endured the cross, endured the vilest contradiction of sinners against himself*, Heb. xii. 3. Though he was reviled, reproached, and put under the worst names and characters, called *a deceiver of the people; a drunkard, a friend of publicans and sinners*, and charged with being in compact with Satan; yet he *reviled not again*. When he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth

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judgeth righteously, 1 Pet. ii. 24. Amidst all he suffered from hell and earth, he never betrayed the least sign of impatience. Accordingly, the Prophet Isaiah tells us, "He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers, is dumb, so he opened not his mouth." He well knew, that though there was no cause of suffering in himself, all the sufferings he underwent, were justly inflicted upon him, by the hand of justice, considered as our Surety.

7. Our Lord Jesus is full of love; love to God, and love to the souls of men, was the golden weight which engaged and carried him forward in every part of the work JEHOVAH gave him to do; so we find him entering upon the crowning piece of the work of our redemption, as to purchase, in the highest exercise of love to his, and our heavenly Father, John xiv. 31. "That the world may know," (says he) "that I love the Father, and as the Father hath given me commandment, even so I do, arise, let us go hence." Love to the souls of men, was the cord by which he bound himself to the horns of the altar, as a sacrifice in their room and stead. Hence saith the Apostle Paul, *He loved me, and gave himself for me.*

8. To add no more upon this head, our Lord Jesus was full of zeal for God, and the advancement of his declarative glory. We have a peculiar instance of his zeal in his purging the Temple, John ii. 13,—18. Upon that occasion, we are told, the Disciples remembered it was written concerning Christ, *the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up*, referring to Psal. lxxix. 10. This zeal for the glory of God, which appeared so eminently in Christ, may be viewed rather as a compound of various graces of the Spirit, than as any one grace in particular. It has
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in it fervent love to God, real grief and sorrow when he is dishonoured, with a mixture of holy displeasure upon that account. This zeal likewise excites and stirs up the person in whom it is, to lay out himself, to the utmost of his power, in his place and station, to promote and advance the honour and glory of God.

We proceed now to the *second* thing proposed in the method, which was,

II. To enquire in what capacity our Lord Jesus hath this grace poured into his lips. And,

1. Grace is poured into his lips as the second Adam: The Surety of the New Covenant; the Head and Representative of his mystical body the Church. Whatever we lost by our fall in the first Adam, is restored to us in Christ. Hence he tells us, Psal. lxxix. 4. *I restored that which I took not away.* He has restored the image of God, which we lost in the first Adam, by assuming our nature into a personal union with himself. He has restored that life, light, liberty, peace and plenty to men, of which they were robbed by Satan: As in Adam all died whom he represented in the Covenant of Works, so in Christ, all whom he represented in the Covenant of Grace, have been, or shall be made alive: As all men were ruined by the unrighteousness and disobedience of the first Adam, so by the righteousness of the second, many have been and shall be enriched with the blessings of grace and glory. Hence saith the Psalmist, concerning Christ, with a manifest eye to the ruin and destruction brought upon men by the breach of the law-covenant, Psal. lxxii. 17. "Men shall be blessed in him, all nations shall call him blessed."

2. Grace is poured into Christ's lips, as the Trustee of the New Covenant; in this respect, God hath made him most blessed for ever, Psal. xxi. 6.

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or, as it is in the original, *thou hast set him to be blessings for ever.* Man had his stock put into his own hand according to the tenor of the Old Covenant; but being left to the freedom of his own will, though he had power to keep possession of what God was pleased to bestow upon him, Satan soon found means to spoil him of all his precious things; But God has now provided for the absolute security of our enriching treasure, by putting it in Christ's hand, to be kept for us, and given out to us, as our necessities require. *It pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell,* Col. i. 19. And the foe cannot exact upon him, nor the son of mischief rob him of any, the least part of that fulness. This fulness is communicable, and men have been receiving out of it, *grace for grace,* since ever Christ was exhibited in the first promise, and yet it is in no way impaired. It still dwells in him: And what a comfortable consideration is this, not only to sinners who are poor and miserable, wretched, blind and naked; but even to believers whose spiritual wants daily recur upon them! Whatever wants and exigencies they labour under, they have enough in him. Hence says the Apostle to the Colossians, and in them to all true believers, chap. ii. 10. "Ye are complete in him who is the head
"of all principality and power."

3. Grace is poured into Christ's lips, as the Administrator of the Covenant of Grace. He had the burden of purchasing all spiritual blessings for men; and he alone has the honour of giving them out to men; Acts v. 31. "Him hath God exalted
"with his own right hand, to give repentance
"unto Israel, and forgiveness of sins." Whatever blessings men stand in need of, JEHOVAH the Father saith to them, as Pharaoh did to the Egyptians concerning Joseph, "Go to my Son, whom I
"have

“have appointed heir of all things.” The unsearchable riches of grace and glory, are all at his disposal. Hence says he to his Disciples, when settling a correspondence with them, (if we may so speak) before his departure from them as to his bodily presence, John xiv. 13, 14. “Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.” I am soon to depart from this world, would he say, and you are to see me no more here with the bodily eye until the restitution of all things; but that is not to interrupt a friendly intercourse between me and you: Whatever you need, ask it of the Father in my name, upon the footing of what I have done and suffered in your law-room and stead; and be assured of it, I will give it you. Grace was poured into Christ’s lips, that he might pour it into the hearts of men.

4. and *lastly*, Grace is poured into IMMANUEL’S lips, as sustaining the character of our Head and Husband, our Father, our elder Brother, our best Friend, and the Steward set over the family of God, to give every one his portion in due season. And the great design of the Gospel, is to set forth Christ to the view of sinners, in the glory of his person, and fulness of grace and truth that dwells in him, in virtue of which, he is exactly suited to their condition; and to declare to them, the free and open access they have to him by faith, in all his fulness. Accordingly, in that solemn invitation our Lord gave sinners to come to him, Matth. xi. 27, 28. He first tells them, “All things are delivered to me of my Father:” And then adds, “Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” And when he calls those who labour and are heavy laden, to come to him, we are not to suppose, he was requiring any prerequisite qualifications,

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fications, as needful in the case of those who might expect welcome from him ; but the words are to be viewed as expressive of the real condition of sinners, whether they be sensible of it or not : They are by nature labouring in the very fire, and lying under an unsupportable load of sin and guilt, and exposed to an eternal burden of divine wrath and vengeance.

III. The *third* head was, to give the reasons of the doctrine ; or shew whence it is, that the grace that is poured into the lips of our glorious Redeemer, is condescended on as such a leading part of his glory and beauty. And,

1. *Grace* is here considered as the glory of Christ, “ because in this internal grace the reparation of the
“ image of God doth consist. All the glory that God
“ thought meet to communicate to his creature man,
“ (and it was unspeakably great) was to make him
“ in his own image and likeness. This was the glo-
“ ry God intended for him : Every thing else doth
“ but follow it. Now, we lost this image, and be-
“ came as like the devil, as if we had been begotten
“ by him, John viii. 44. We are the children of the
“ devil, he is our father ; we are a generation of vi-
“ pers, the seed of the serpent by nature : Well, it is
“ grace that doth repair, and renew the image of
“ God. It is grace that makes a representation of
“ God unto us ; and therefore doth the glory of
“ Christ consist in grace. The Apostle tells us so,
“ 2 Cor. iv. 6. *We beheld the glory of God in the face*
“ *of Christ*. How is that ? Why, in that abounding
“ grace that was in Christ, there is made such a re-
“ presentation of God, that therein we may see his
“ likeness.”

2. This *grace* is the glory of Christ, “ because it
“ is that which inclines the heart of Jesus Christ un-
“ to all that goodness and kindness that he hath
“ shewed

“ shewed unto us. Whence was it that Jesus Christ
“ loved us, so as to lay down his life for us? Whence
“ does he continue to have compassion on us, though
“ ignorant and out of the way? It is from that
“ abounding grace, and unspeakable heavenly love
“ that was in his heart and soul.” The more
grace any have, the more they abound in love,
compassion, and delight in doing the will of God.
And so there was that abundance of grace in
Christ, that inclined him to do all that for us which
our condition required; “ to live, to die, and to
“ intercede for us. And this makes Christ very
“ beautiful and glorious to the eye of faith.”

3. *Grace* is the glory of Christ, “ as he is, in re-
“ spect of it, the great example and pattern, where-
“ unto we ought to labour after conformity. When
“ we had lost our all, and wandered up and down,
“ it was not enough that we should have a rule set
“ us, but we must moreover have a pattern to fol-
“ low: We must be like unto Christ; and there
“ is an unconquerable desire implanted in the heart
“ of every believer in the world, to be like unto Je-
“ sus Christ: Because God hath, in the way of an
“ ordinance, appointed him to be our pattern. We
“ are but trifling Christians, and a dishonour to our
“ profession, if we make not this the design of our
“ souls continually, that we may be in the world as
“ Christ was: That the same mind may be in us,
“ that was in him, Phil. ii. 5. The same meek-
“ ness, humility, self-denial, faith, love, patience,
“ and zeal for the glory of God, that was in him,
“ though not in the same measure and degree.”

Our Lord Jesus in respect of the grace that is
poured into his lips, is the great pattern of what
all believers are to be in their own persons, in due
time. All his younger brethren were predesti-
nated to be conform to his image, *that he might be*
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the first born among many brethren, Rom. viii. 29.
And as it is the glory of Christ, thus to be the exemplar and pattern, to which all his children are to be conformed, in there whole man, soul and body, so far as they are capable of it : It is a most pleasing and soul-ravishing sight, to see him by faith as our pattern, and all that grace in him, whereby we are to be made perfectly like him ; which likeness to him is begun in our regeneration, carried on in a progressive work of sanctification, and to be perfected in our whole man, at his second appearing, 1 John iii. 2. “ When he shall appear, we shall be “ like him, for we shall see him as he is.”

4. Because grace being poured into his lips, and poured into his lips for our special benefit, it renders him in every respect a fit match for us. What can poor sinful creatures behold with such pleasure and delight, when in any measure sensible of the real state and condition of their souls by nature, as the person of Christ, and that fulness of grace that is in him, so wonderfully suited to the exigencies of their souls ? When they see him full of grace, full of pardoning grace, confirming, comforting, and soul-strengthening grace, and see all that fulness as a fulness to be communicate to them, they are laid under the pleasant necessity of joining with the Psalmist, saying, *Thou art fairer than the children of men ; grace is poured into thy lips.*

5. and lastly, Because Jesus Christ is made an everlasting blessing to the sons of men, in virtue of this grace that is poured into his lips ; God having poured grace into his lips, hath set him to be blessings for ever, Psal. xxi. 6. Men shall be blessed in him. This grace has been, since ever the promulgation of the first promise, and will, to the finishing of the mystery of God, be dropping from the heart and lips of our glorious IMMANUEL, upon the
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sons of men, by means of a gospel-dispensation, for their conversion, edification, upbuilding in holiness, and comfort through faith unto salvation.

IV. It was proposed *lastly*, to make some improvement of the subject. And this we may do,

1. *First*, In a few inferences. And,

(1.) If it be so as has been said, that grace and holiness is that which renders our Lord Jesus so very fair and beautiful; then we may see how much grace should be prized by us. Grace is the ornament that adorns the soul, and not the riches, pleasures, and profits of the world. The men of the world reckon the things of the world their glory, as we see in the case of Laban's sons, Gen. xxxi. 2. But grace is the Christian's glory. It is that which ornaments and renders him beautiful in the sight of God, angels, and all the men who are endowed with spiritual discerning. Grace beautifies the soul, renders the conversation profitable and edifying, pleasant and savoury. To this purpose speaks our Lord to his spouse, Cant. iv. 11. "Thy lips, O
" my spouse, drop as the honey-comb; honey and
" milk are under thy tongue, and the smell of thy
" garments, is like the smell of Lebanon."

(2.) We may see, what reason we have to admire the wisdom and goodness of God, which are so richly manifested towards fallen men, in his providing such a suitable help for them, as his own Son, and giving all that good into his hand, which he designed to bestow upon them, that it might be safely kept for, and given out to them, according as their necessities should require. *It hath pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell*, Col. i. 19. There it dwells safely; and we have free access to it by faith, in every time of need. Hence saith the Apostle to the Hebrews, chap. iv. 14, 16. *Seeing then that we have a great High Priest,*
that

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that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God,—
Let us come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may
obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

(3.) We may see matter of comfort to believers amidst all their wants. Those who have already received grace, and the gift of righteousness, still need more grace : There is something lacking in their faith, their love, humility, zeal, &c. But believers, whatever your wants be, and however frequently they recur upon you, there is enough in your New Covenant Head, to supply them all : *Grace is poured into his lips*, and he is ready to pour it into your hearts, as your exigencies may require. He is really saying to you in every straitening case, as he did to the great Apostle of the Gentiles, 2 Cor. xii. 9. *My grace is sufficient for thee ; for my strength is made perfect in weakness.* Being in Christ by faith, ye are complete in him ; for he is made of God unto you, *wisdom* as your Prophet, *righteousness* as the High Priest of your profession, *sanctification* as your King, and *complete redemption*.

(4.) We may see ground of encouragement to those who are yet destitute of grace, to come to Christ for it. *Grace was poured into his lips*, that he might give it to the graceless. "When he ascended on high, he received gifts for the rebellious," Psal. lxxviii. 18. Many a poor, miserable, wretched sinner, has *received out of Christ's fulness, and grace for grace.* And you who have not yet tasted that the Lord is gracious, may be enriched out of it also, with all spiritual blessings. Our Lord Jesus makes an offer of himself, and all his fulness unto you ; "Wherefore then do ye spend your money for that which is not bread ? and your labour for that which satisfieth not ?" Harken diligently to his gracious voice in the gospel, and eat ye that which is good, and let your souls delight themselves in fatness. Our glo-

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rious IMMANUEL is *fairer than the children of men*. In him there is life for the dead, eye-salve for the blind, pardon for the guilty, sanctification for the filthy, liberty for the captives, rest for the weary, health for the diseased; and all to be had *freely, without money, and without price*.

2. This doctrine might be improved in an use of trial.

Have you received grace out of the fulness that is in Christ? Now, as grace in the believer is of the same kind with that grace which was poured into Christ's lips, though very different in measure and degree; it likewise bears some resemblance thereto, in the way of its acting. You may try yourselves by what was said on the first head; do you believe in God as your God, through our Lord Jesus Christ? And do you endeavour to maintain the claim of faith to him as your God and Father, even when clouds and darkness are round about him? Do you even then aim at trusting in the name of the Lord, and staying yourselves upon your God? Are you thankful to God for all his benefits, and especially for Christ his unspeakable gift? Do you study, through grace, to yield a cheerful and ready obedience to all God's commandments, from love to him, and a tender regard to his authority? Are you humble and self-denied? If ye have learned of Christ, and received out of his fulness, you are meek and lowly in heart. Do you love God; and does your love to him, operate in a hearty concern for the advancement of his declarative glory? In one word, Is Christ *fairer than the children of men* in your esteem? Is he more to you *than any other beloved*? Are you concerned daily to improve him by faith, for grace upon grace? being persuaded that your standing is not in grace received, but in the grace that is in Christ Jesus?

3. The *last* use of the doctrine, shall be in a word of exhortation.

And, *first*, as to you who have been admitted to behold the beauty and glory of Christ by the eye of faith, and have been made partakers of his grace.

(1.) We exhort you, to be much taken up in the believing contemplation of the person and glory of Christ. Think much upon that fulness of grace that is poured into his lips. This is pleasant exercise; the exercise the Psalmist desired to be employed in all the days of his life, Psal. xxvii. 4. "One thing have I desired of the Lord," (says he) "that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his temple." The more you are exercised in the contemplation of Christ, and that fulness of grace that dwells in him, the more precious will he become in your esteem: And the more will your love to him be increased, and your spiritual beauty and likeness to him advanced; 2 Cor. iii. 18. "We all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

(2.) We exhort you to use and improve the grace that is in Christ. Remember that it is poured into his lips for your behoof; that you may daily come to his fulness in the exercise of faith, and receive out of it, *grace for grace*. Your spiritual as well as your bodily wants daily recur upon you. You constantly need quickening grace, subduing and mortifying grace; heart strengthening and confirming grace; and grace to enable you to make a suitable improvement of grace. Grace received, is not sufficient for you. Grace received, is but like

like the oil in the vessel, soon exhausted; but in Christ it is an everflowing, and overflowing fountain. Such is the plenitude of grace that is communicated from the divine to the human nature of Christ, by virtue of the personal union, that it can never be diminished; and it is his royal pleasure, that you ask grace from him, and that to the degree, that your joy may be full; John xvi. 24. "Ask and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." And, for your encouragement to ask, he tells you, the more you ask and receive, *the more is the Father glorified in him.* Hence saith he to the Disciples, John xiv. 13. "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son."

(3.) We exhort you to be humble and thankful to God for the grace you have already received. God has given you Christ, and abundance of grace, and the gift of righteousness with him; and this is infinitely more than if he had created ten thousand worlds, and put them all into your possession. Be concerned to improve the grace he has given you, to his glory in your day and generation, by acting the part of faithful witnesses for him, against a sinful world; cleaving to all his truths and ordinances, with purpose of heart, and adorning the doctrine of God your Saviour in all things. Study to have a walk and conversation before the world, worthy of imitation. This is what our Lord intends in that exhortation to his Disciples, Matth. v. 16. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Remember that you are under the most endearing obligations, to be *blameless and harmless, and without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation*; endeavouring to follow the example of your Lord and Master,
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so far as it is imitable by you; *being in this world, even as he was in it.* And while you carefully consider him as your pattern, be ever mindful of him as the *propitiation for your sins, the Lord your Righteousness.*

(4.) Look much into the word of God, and attend duly upon public ordinances. Christ is to be seen in his own word; therein he exhibits himself, and all his fulness, to the faith of his people. The word of promise is also the vehicle by which he conveys grace into the soul, and refreshes the hearts of his people with the savoury ointments of his Spirit. In one word, *grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.* No present attainments in grace and holiness, can fully content those who have really tasted that the Lord is gracious. They are all of the same mind with the Apostle, when he saith, Phil. iii. 13, 14. "I count not myself to have apprehended: But this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Grace sets men a longing for glory. Those who have already received abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, cannot fail, at least upon some special occasions, to long for their coronation day, when they shall reign in life, and over death, by our Lord Jesus Christ.

Secondly, As for you who are yet strangers to Christ, and so destitute of saving grace. We exhort you,

(1.) To believe the misery of your present condition. *You are poor and miserable, blind and naked.* Whatever be your condition in a present world, and however much of it you may attain to, you are

are really poor. Every man who wants grace, is poor and miserable, though he were clothed in purple, and fared sumptuously every day. Ah! consider, while you are void of the grace of God, you are full of sin, darkness and enmity against him. "The carnal mind is enmity against God; it is not subject to his law, neither indeed can be." You are full of pride, self and legality, and real enemies to your own precious souls; for *all who hate Christ*, as every man in his natural state must do, *they love death*. God is angry with you; and "who knows the power of his wrath?" "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

(2.) We exhort you to believe that you stand in absolute need of Christ, and the grace that is poured into his lips. If you live and die in your present condition, it had been far better for you, your eyes had never seen the sun, or that you had lived among those who hear not the *voice of the Turtle in their land*. The seasons of grace you enjoy, the many kind invitations you have got to come to Christ, and be enriched from his fulness; will render you the more inexcusable in the great and notable day of the Lord. Be exhorted now, to ponder these awful words he will speak to gospel-despisers in that day, Prov. i. 24,—27. "Because I have called, and ye refused, I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity, and will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you."

(3.) We exhort you to believe there is grace in Christ answering to all your wants, and that he makes

94 *Christ Jesus, the Bridegroom of the Church,*

makes you heartily welcome to come to him, and be enriched out of his fulness, for time and eternity. The promises of grace and glory are all free, and have respect to the unworthy : And, as they are free, they are very full. Many have thought, when they were once made sensible of their sin and danger, that they stood in need of more grace and mercy than ever any did : But none ever needed more than God's promise contains ; nor more than they found Christ ready to give, when they were determined, in the day of his power, to cast themselves upon the divine mercy venting through him. They have ever been in case to say with the Church, Micah vii. 18. " Who is a God like unto thee, " that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage ? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy."

4. and lastly, We exhort you to consider that the day of grace will not always last with you. It is a limited day, and may be shorter than you are aware of. Christ and all his fulness is now in your offer ; but he will not be always so : *Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation.* While the Holy Ghost is saying, *To-day*, it is dangerous for you to trust to *To-morrow*. Who can tell you, but ere that time, *the things that belong to your peace, may be for ever hid from your eyes ?*

If it should be asked, How shall we come to be actually interested in Christ, and made partakers of the grace that is in him ? We answer, Christ and all spiritual blessings, in and with him, is God's free gift. John iii. 16. " God so loved the world, that " he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever " believeth in him, should not perish, but have " everlasting life." See also Isa. lv. 1, 2. And the method and order he observes, when he actually confers

confers this gift upon any, is, that he gives his Spirit to work faith in their hearts, whereby they are united to the person of his Son, *in whom all fulness dwells*; and being united to Christ, they enter upon the begun enjoyment of all spiritual blessings in him. Christ and his grace cannot be separated; God gives him as the prime gift, and all things with him, Rom. viii. 32. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Now the order in which God gives, is that in which you must receive, 1 Cor. iii. 22, 23. Embrace the Saviour by faith. *Kiss the Son lest he be angry.* Plead for the accomplishment of the promise, for bringing you to close with Christ by faith. It is the work of God the Holy Ghost, to determine sinners to believe in him, and submit to his righteousness; and he is promised to them for these valuable purposes. Hence saith JEHOVAH, Isa. xlv. 3, 4, 5. "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground, &c. And they shall spring up as among the grafs, as willows by the water-courses. One shall say, I am the Lord's; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob; and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and sir- name himself by the name of Israel." Be earnest with the Lord, that he may bring you to this exercise; Then shall you see the incomparable beauty of our glorious IMMANUEL, and prize his grace above the golden wedge of Ophir; counting *every thing else but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord*: Desiring to win him as your enriching pearl, and to be found in him, not having your own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of the glorious Surety, the righteousness which is of God by faith.

S E R M O N V.

The CAPTAIN of Salvation, with his Sword girt on his thigh, defending the Church from the Rage of her Enemies.

PSAL. xlv. 3.

Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O Most Mighty, with thy Glory and thy Majesty.

HAVING discoursed a little from the preceding verse, concerning the beauty and glory of the Redeemer's person; as also of the grace that was poured into his lips, to fit and qualify him in the human nature, for his glorious undertaking in the New Covenant, as the Head and Surety of the elect world; we shall now offer you some thoughts from this verse, in which the Psalmist sets our Lord Jesus before us, managing the affairs of his kingdom, with his sword girt on his thigh: *Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O Most Mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty.* These words contain a charge given to the Captain of our salvation, to make use of the fulness of *grace that is poured into his lips*, to the end and purpose for which it was given him: Or, the words may be considered, as containing a declaration of what he would do, Thou shalt "gird thy sword upon thy thigh; O most "Mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty." Where,

1. We may observe the person speaking, viz. **JEHOVAH** the Father, or the Psalmist in his name.
2. Notice the person to whom he speaks, *The King*. The same glorious person, whose incomparable beauty and fulness are described in the preceding verse. The appellation here given him,

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The most Mighty, clearly shews who is meant: The word properly signifies one that prevails in every thing he takes in hand; and such an one must be the *Mighty God*, as our Lord is expressly called, Isa. ix. 6. And again, saith the Father concerning him, Psal. lxxxix. 19. *I have laid help upon one that is Mighty*. And when the Prophet asks concerning Christ, *Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah?* He answers, *I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save*. As if he had said, Do you enquire who I am? Then know, I am he that speaks in righteousness, and am mighty to save. *This is my name, and this is my memorial, in all generations*.

3. We may observe the charge given to this mighty One, which is to gird on his sword. *Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O Most Mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty*. By his sword we are to understand his word, called *the sword of the Spirit* also, Eph. vi. 17. This sword is said to proceed out of his mouth, Rev. i. 16. It is called *the rod of his strength*, or his strong rod, Psal. cx. 2. "The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion; rule thou in the midst of thine enemies." The Captain of our salvation is a man of war, and his word is the weapon wherewith he subdues his people to himself, and restrains and conquers all his and their enemies. The sword is here put for all Christ's armour, as are his arrows in a following verse of this Psalm. And as by the sword we are to understand the word of Christ, by the girding it upon the thigh, must be meant the putting of it in a readiness for use. When David intended to go against Nabal, he gave his men a charge, saying, "Gird ye on every man his sword" 1 Sam. xxv. 13. And the threescore valiant men about the bed of our New Testament Solomon, Cant. iii. 7. are

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said

said to have every one his sword upon his thigh, because of fear in the night. This then is a charge given to the Captain of our salvation, to prepare for war ; or it is a declaration of what he was really about to do : Thou shalt gird thy sword upon thy thigh ; thou shalt go forth as a mighty Champion, conquering and to conquer.

4. We may observe the manner of his girding on his sword, it is *with glory and with majesty*. These words are to be viewed, either as setting forth the stately and majestic manner, wherein the Captain of salvation puts on his armour, and goes into the field of action ; namely, with undaunted courage and bravery. He girds on his sword as one sure of the victory, before the conflict is begun. Or the words *glory and majesty*, are rather to be considered as joined with the sword, by way of apposition, being in the original, both in the same case with the word rendered *sword*. And then we may read the whole verse thus, "Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most Mighty, which is thy glory and thy majesty." The word of Christ may, with great propriety, be called *his glory*. He *magnifies his word above all his name*, Psal. cxxxviii. 2. And by his word in the hand of his Spirit, he brings to pass events which are truly glorious and majestic.

The general doctrine contained in these words, then is,

Doct. *That as Jesus Christ the mighty Captain of our salvation, is engaged in a warfare against all his, and his people's enemies : So the weapon he makes use of in that warfare, is his glorious and majestic word.* "Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most Mighty ; thy glory and thy majesty." Cor. x. 4, 5. "The weapons of our warfare, are not carnal,

“nal, but mighty through God, to the pulling
“down of strong holds, casting down imaginati-
“ons and every high thing that exalteth itself a-
“gainst the knowledge of God, and bringing into
“captivity every thought to the obedience of
“Christ.” The weapons the Apostle so highly
commends in these verses, are the word and ordi-
nances of Christ.

In discoursing further from these words, we shall
observe the following method, which is,

I. To enquire whence it is our Lord Jesus is de-
signed *the mighty One ; the most Mighty*.

II. Shew in what respects the word of Christ
may be compared to a sword.

III. Speak a little of his girding on his sword,
or mention some things implied in his so doing.

IV. Give some reasons why the sword of Christ,
which is his word, is called his glory and majesty.

V. Make some improvement ; and those things
are proposed as the Lord may direct.

I. It was proposed to enquire whence it is our
Lord Jesus is designed *most Mighty*. *The mighty
One* by way of eminence. And,

1. He is so from the omnipotent power of his di-
vine nature, which is the principal of his mighty
operations, in the union of his person. So the
Prophet declares, Isa. ix. 6. “Unto us a child is
“born, unto us a Son is given.” And how shall
he be called ? “Wonderful, Counsellor, the migh-
“ty God.” This Child that is born unto us, this
Son that is given unto us, his name shall be, that
is, he really is, *the mighty God* ; Why so ? because
of the union of the divine nature with the human
in

in the same person, whereby the same person becomes a *Child born*, and is also *the mighty God*.

2. He is mighty, from the authority and power that was communicated and given unto him by the Father, as Mediator, for the accomplishing of his whole work. Two things concur to constitute one legally mighty to proper ends; first, strength and power; secondly authority. Where there is strength and power, and no authority, it is force. And where there is authority, but no strength or power, that authority will be void. Christ had strength and power as the *mighty God*; and he hath authority too, as all power is communicated to him by God the Father, as he declares to his Disciples, Matth. xxviii. 18. And concerning the power given him by the Father, the Apostle tells us, Eph. ii. 22, 23. That God hath put "all things under the feet of Christ, and hath given him to be the head over all things to the Church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all."

3. and lastly, He may justly be designed *most Mighty*, from what he has done, not only in giving being and existence to all things, as *God equal with the Father*; but also considered as Mediator. Our Lord Jesus hath done excellent things, this is known in all the earth. He has glorified God upon the earth; finished a work infinitely above the power of angels and men. He has not only fulfilled all righteousness, but magnified the law and made it honourable, Isa. xlii. 21. "He has finished transgression, and made an end of sin." Dan. ix. 24. In virtue of the satisfaction he has made for sin, God has passed a sentence of condemnation upon it in his flesh, Rom. viii. 3. He has spoiled principalities and powers, destroyed him that had the power of death, Heb. ii. 14. and wrested the keys of hell and death out of his hand. These
are

are the doings of one who is beyond all ground of doubt, *most Mighty*.

II. The *second* thing proposed was to shew, in what respects the word of Christ may be compared to a *sword*. And we observe in general, that the sword being of constant use among soldiers, is that weapon by which they not only defend themselves, but likewise do execution upon their enemies. The word of Christ may be called *his sword*, because it is the instrument he makes use of in the hand of the Spirit, for asserting and maintaining his royal prerogatives, as King in Zion, against all his enemies; and in defending his true subjects from the rage and fury of their oppressors. Our Lord Jesus subdues his elect to himself by means of his word; accompanied by the power of his Spirit; when his word reaches their heart in the hand of his Spirit, they fall under him, in the way of kindly subjection. When the rod of his strength is sent out to Zion, the people are made willing in the day of his power, Psal. cx. 3. The strong hold of original corruption, unbelief, pride, legality, enmity against God, and prejudices at the way of salvation by free grace, are pulled down: Imaginations, or carnal reasonings, are cast to the ground, with every high thing; and every thought is brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. And thus the people are made willing to submit to his righteousness, and devote themselves to his service; made willing to be saved by him, and serve him in the newness of the Spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter; and being brought into his family and service, he defends them in it, from all their foes; whom henceforward he considers as his enemies. As he saith, on the matter, to every one who is determined to come over to his stand-
ard,

ard, what David did to Abiathar, 1 Sam, xxvii. 23. "He that seeketh thy life, seeketh my life; and "with me thou shalt be in safeguard" More particularly,

1. Our Lord Jesus defends his subjects from their persecutors by his word and Spirit. Whatever persecutors may be permitted to do with the bodies of any of God's dear saints, their souls, against which the shot of their enemies is chiefly aimed, are still in safeguard. The most subtle of their persecuting foes, even Satan the head of them, cannot lay the snare, either by craft or violence, so as to ruin the soul, or drive the believer off from his dutiful allegiance to Christ. The Spirit of God displaying the glory of Christ to the soul, by means of the word, puts faith in such a lively exercise, as that it proves the great engine whereby believers are enabled to overcome Satan, the world, and all their other enemies. Hence it is said of the worthies under the tyranny of Antichrist, Rev. xii. 11. "They overcame him," viz. Satan, (who warred against them in his instruments) "by the blood of "the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, "and they loved not their lives unto the death." When the people of God are led out under the influences of his Spirit, to the actings of faith upon the word of promise, they find a resting place in the hottest noon of persecution, and are in case *to rejoice that they are counted worthy to suffer shame for his name's sake.*

2. By his word and Spirit, he defends his people from the deceit and cunning craftiness of those who lie in wait to deceive them. Hence says the Psalmist, Psal. xvii. 4. concerning the works of men, "by the words of thy lips, I have kept me "from the paths of the destroyer." The true subjects of Christ, have no worse enemies, than those

those seducing heretics, who would corrupt them from the simplicity that is in Christ, and draw them into damnable errors and heresy. But the Captain of salvation defends his people from the deceit, as well as the violence of their soul-enemies; and the great mean he makes use of in doing so, is his word accompanied by his Spirit. He makes his word *a light to their feet, and a lamp to their path*, whereby they are enabled to discern the way of error, and avoid it; and to see the paths of righteousness, make choice of them, and walk in them.

3. Our Lord Jesus defends his people from all their inward enemies, by his word and Spirit. He *sanctifies* his people *through the truth*, John xvii. 17. The word is the great mean of begetting and promoting holiness in them; the great and precious promises are given to them, and hereby they are made partakers of a divine nature, 2 Pet. i. 4. He supports and strengthens the principles of grace and holiness in the hearts of his people, or the new creature, by renewed communications of grace, from the inexhaustable fulness that dwells in him: And the word of promise is the vehicle, through which these new supplies of grace are conveyed to the soul. Of these the Psalmist speaks, when he saith, Psal. ciii. 5. The Lord had satisfied his mouth with good things, and renewed his youth like the eagles. And promising himself strength and support, upon the footing of God's faithful promise against all his enemies, outward and inward, he saith, Psal. xcii. 10. "My horn shalt thou exalt, like the horn of the unicorn: I shall be anointed with fresh oil." It is by a believing improvement of the promise, and Christ in the promise, that the Christian derives sin-subduing, soul-quickenings, and heart-strengthening grace from his exalted Prince and Saviour.

4. and *lastly*, It is by means of the word, our Lord Jesus supports, comforts, and bears up his people, under all the tribulation they are trysted with in their house of pilgrimage. Hence says the Psalmist, Psal. cxix. 92. "If thy law had not been my delights, I should have perished in mine affliction." And to the same purpose he speaks, ver. 49, 50. "Remember the word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope. This is my comfort in mine affliction; for thy word hath quickened me." There is something in the word of Christ, suited to every condition any of his children can possibly be in; and when he is pleased to shine on it by his spirit, and strengthen the spiritual eye to discern it, it never fails to afford consolation.

Secondly, Our Lord Jesus makes use of his word, not only to assert and maintain his royal prerogatives, as King in Zion, and defend his true subjects from the rage and fury of their oppressors; but likewise for the downbringing of all his and their enemies, Isa. xi. 4. "He shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked." Wherever the word of Christ comes, if it has not a converting, sanctifying, edifying, and comforting effect, the consequence of it will be, killing and hardening. So we find he threatens to fight against his enemies with the sword of his mouth, Rev. iii. 16. And to hew them by his Prophets, and slay them by the words of his mouth, Hos. vi. 5. When the word of the gospel does not prove the favour of life, to those to whom he sends it, it will work death. Hence saith the Apostle, speaking in the name of all faithful gospel ministers, 2 Cor. ii. 15, 16. "We are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish. To the one

"we

"we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life." Christ will judge and sentence all his enemies in the day of final reckoning, according to the judgment written in his word; the word that he hath spoken shall judge them in the latter day: And the judgments he inflicts upon persons and nations, as warnings of the last, are denounced in his word, and inflicted in an exact conformity thereto. Accordingly when the Lord reproves Judah for neglecting the warnings of approaching judgments, which he gave them by his Prophets, he saith, Zech. i. 5, 6. "Your fathers, where are they? and the Prophets, do they live for ever? But my words and my statutes, which I commanded my servants the Prophets, did they not take hold of your fathers? and they returned and said, Like as the Lord of hosts thought to do unto us, according to our ways, and according to our doings, so hath he dealt with us."

III. The *third* thing proposed, was, to speak a little of our Lord's girding on his sword; or mention some things implied in his doing it. And,

His *girding his sword upon his thigh*, may in general, denote his putting it in a readiness for accomplishing what he designs by it; which may include the following things.

i. His appointing ordinances in the Church. The preaching of the word, is the great mean he is pleased to make use of for the conversion of sinners, and the upbuilding of the saints in holiness and comfort. However much the preaching of the gospel has been, and will continue to be, derided by men of corrupt minds, as foolishness, it is a special mean God makes use of for the saving of them who believe, 1 Cor. i. 21. "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe"

Our Lord Jesus has also appointed the sacraments of Baptism and his Supper, for the confirmation of our faith in the great and precious promises of the New Covenant. In the promises he gives himself to us, and a disposition to the inheritance of the saints in light; and in the sacraments he gives us an investment upon the disposition.

2. It includes his calling, fitting and qualifying a gospel ministry to bear his name before sinners. Faithful Ministers are the gift of Christ, to the Church, Eph. iv. 10, 11, 12. "He ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things." And he gave some, Apostles; some, Prophets; and some, Evangelists; and some, Pastors and Teachers;—for the work of the ministry, for the "edifying of the body of Christ," &c. And altho' extraordinary office-bearers, as Apostles, Prophets and Evangelists, ceased to be in the Church, when once the canon of scripture was complete; Pastors and Teachers are standing office-bearers in the Church, and will be continued with her, until the mystery of God shall be finished; as is clear from our Lord's promise to the Disciples, Matth. xxviii. 20. *Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.* Those to whom this promise was primarily made, were not to continue to the end of the world; and therefore the promise must be viewed, as not only respecting them, but those also who were to succeed them in every thing belonging to their office, not extraordinary, such as preaching the word, dispensing the sacraments, applying the censures of the Church, and ruling and governing her by a ministerial explication and application of the royal laws of Christ.

3. and lastly, His *girding his sword upon his thigh* includes his accompanying the dispensation of all his ordinances, with the power and efficacy of his Spirit,

Spirit, according to that forecited, Matth. xxviii. 20. he is with all whom he sends to preach the gospel; with them to furnish them with gifts and grace for the discharge of their work; with them to protect and defend them in it, and to establish the work of their hands in the conversion of sinners, and the upbuilding of the saints in their most holy faith.

IV. The *fourth* head proposed in the method, was, to give some reasons why the sword of Christ, which is his word, is called *his glory and majesty*. And,

1. The word of Christ may be called *his glory and majesty*, because of the purity and holiness that shines forth in every part of it. The preceptive part of the word sets forth the purity and holiness of its author, in as much as it requires of every man perfect holiness both in heart and life, expressly forbidding all impurity in thought, word or deed, Psal. xix. 8, 9. "The commandment of the Lord is pure. The fear of the Lord is clean." And, says the Apostle, Rom. vii. 12. "The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good." All the words of Christ are pure words, as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times, Psal. xii. 7. All the threatnings proclaim their author to be glorious in holiness; the manifest scope and design of them being, to hedge up mens ways, and deter them from the love and practice of every false and wicked way. The great and precious promises of the word are given to us for our sanctification; that we through the belief of them, may be made partakers of a divine nature, 2 Pet. i. 4. And the same beauty of holiness shines forth with the brightest splendor in every other part of sacred writ.

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2. The word of Christ may be designed *his glory and majesty*, because the scope and tendency of it is to declare his glory and majesty. To set him forth in the glory of his person, as *God-man Immanuel*: All the Scriptures testify of him, as he tells the Jews, John v. 39. And the testimony they give to him, is, that *he is the true God and eternal life*, 1 John v. 20. The Scriptures set forth the greatness and majesty of their glorious Author, and their leading scope is to give all glory to him, and lay created excellency in the dust. How inconceivably great is the majesty that is discovered in the name by which he designs himself to Moses at the bush? Exod. iii. 14. In the loving and gracious call he gives to sinners to come to him for salvation, Isa. xlv. 22. "Look unto me and be ye saved, for I am God, and there is none else." And in the declaration he makes of his power, to avenge himself upon all his enemies, Deut. xxxii. 40, 41. "I lift up my hand to heaven, and say, I live for ever. If I whet my glittering sword, and mine hand take hold on judgment; I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and will reward them that hate me."

3. The word of Christ may be called *his glory and majesty*, because he therein manifests his glory unto us. O what pleasant and heart-ravishing views of Christ have we in the glass of the gospel? There we behold his glory; the glory of his person, of his love, and the love of a three-one God in him. The glorious fulness of *grace that is poured into his lips*; the fulness of all saving offices, wherewith he is clothed by the Father, in respect of which he is made unto us *wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption*: There also we behold that fulness of power which is communicated to him, for fully executing all these saving offices, in the work of our redemption,

tion, together with his hearty good will, and readiness to exercise it for that end. In the word of promise, we have, as it were, a map of the glorious inheritance he has procured for all the heirs of promise.

4. The word of Christ may be called *his glory and majesty*, because of these glorious and majestic effects it has upon the hearts and consciences of men. Our Lord Jesus is a King, and his word is attended with power, Psal. xxix. 5. "The voice of the Lord is powerful, the voice of the Lord is full of majesty." The word of the Lord is a hammer that breaketh the rocks in pieces. When the holy Spirit takes the word of Christ into his hand, it has a heart-searching effect, and penetrates into its most secret recesses. It is a sword with two edges, quick and powerful, laying open the heart; Heb. iv. 12. "The word of the Lord is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of the soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart." This word searches out the latent corruptions of the heart. Hence says the Apostle Paul, *I had not known lust, except the law had said thou shalt not covet*, Rom. vii. 7. and verse 9. he adds, *I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died.*

The word of Christ accompanied by the power of the Spirit, can awaken the most secure and stupid sinner, to see his sin, and the danger to which he is exposed on account of it. It made *Felix tremble*, Acts xxiv. 25. And those who had embued their hands in the blood of the Son of God, to cry out, *What shall we do to be saved?* The word of Christ has a converting efficacy; by it he makes the people willing in the day of his power. "The law

“law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul :
 “The testimony of the Lord is sure, making the
 “simple wise.” His word has a heart-strengthening, reviving and comforting efficacy. We have a very melancholy condition set forth, Psal. cvii. from the 9th to the 19th verse ; And what was the cure ? you see in verse 20th, *He sent his word and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions.* These are some of the glorious effects of the word of Christ, and which many have experienced. And it highly concerns every one of you to seek to have the experimental knowledge of them while you enjoy a dispensation of the gospel. Plead that it may come unto you, not in word only, but *in power, in the demonstration of the holy Spirit, and in much assurance.*

We now proceed to make some short improvement of the subject, which was the last thing proposed in the method. And this may be done,

First, By deducing a few inferences.

1. Then, we may see and be informed, whence it is, that our Lord Jesus has gone through with the arduous work of mens redemption and salvation, to the glory of God, and eternal consolation of all the spiritual Israel. Why, he is *most mighty, over all, God blessed for ever*, Rom. ix. 5. Though he is really man as well as God, his person is but one, a divine person. And hence it is that all the work performed by him, in our nature, has an infinite value, worth and efficacy in it. It is owing to the infinite dignity of our Redeemer’s person, that his obedience *has magnified the law, and made it honourable* ; that his sufferings and death have fully satisfied the justice of God ; and that his sufferings, which were but of short continuance, (however heavy) have completely satisfied for innumerable offences ; every one of which had an infinite evil

evil in it, being committed against an infinitely holy God. Our glorious Redeemer being IMMAMUEL, God and man in one person; the proper works of each nature, are accepted of God for us, and relied on by us as the works of the whole person. His blood is *the blood of God*, Acts xx. 28. The life he laid down for us, *the life of God*. Hence says the Apostle, 1 John iii. 16. "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us."

2. We may see, what a safe and happy people they are who have fled unto Christ by faith, for refuge. He is *most mighty*; *mighty to save*; *able to save to the uttermost all that come to the Father by him*. Believers, you have many enemies; they are strong beside, and it is a cruel hatred they bear to your souls; but your Redeemer is *mighty*; he will thoroughly plead your cause. He overcame all your spiritual enemies upon the cross; and he is going forward from conquering, with his *sword upon his thigh*, until he be a complete victor, not only over all his, but over all the enemies of his people. As they are all meritoriously vanquished and overcome by him already, so he must reign till they be really made his footstool, and bruised under the feet of all his true subjects. Well may we then join with the Psalmist, saying, "O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee." And with Moses concerning Israel, Deut. xxxiii. 29. "Happy art thou, O Israel; who is like unto thee, O people saved by the LORD, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! All thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee, and thou shalt tread upon their high places."

3. We may see the egregious folly of all who endeavour to stand in the way of the advancement of the kingdom and interests of Christ. He is *most mighty*;

mighty ; whoever they be that harden themselves against him, it is impossible they can prosper : The Captain of salvation has *his sword girt on his thigh* ; and he is *King of kings, and Lord of lords*. His Church may be, and often has been, sore thrust at by her enemies ; but he stands on her right hand to defend her, and shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath ; and the men of might shall not find their hands. He is the rock himself, upon which the Church is built ; and therefore the gates of hell shall not prevail against her. Every weapon formed against her, is under the blasting influence of his curse ; and therefore cannot prosper. Hence says he, Isa. liv. 17. “ No weapon that is formed
 “ against thee shall prosper ; and every tongue that
 “ shall rise against thee in judgment, thou shalt
 “ condemn. This is the heritage of the servants
 “ of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me,
 “ saith the Lord.”

4. We may see with what reverence and attention men should both read the word of God, and hear it read and preached unto them. Christ is speaking to us in his word ; speaking to us from heaven, Heb. xii. 25. And when he speaks, it certainly becomes us to hear, with the deepest reverence and godly fear, laying open the heart to his word, and mixing faith with it. It is the sword of IMMANUEL's excellency, and the sceptre of his kingdom. And none can evince to themselves or the world around them, that they are his true subjects, who do not receive his truth in the love of it ; subject the heart to, and endeavour to order and regulate the life and conversation by it. Whatever professions of kindness for Christ any may make, *if they receive not the love of the truth*, and be cast into a gospel mould, both in respect of heart and life, he will not acknowledge them for his real friends,

friends, *in the day when he makes up his jewels* ; but profess unto them, *I never knew you*, I never approved of you ; your words were indeed sometimes good, but your hearts were never right with me, nor sound in my statutes, *depart from me ye workers of iniquity.*

5. We may see matter of reproof to those who do not only slight and neglect the word of Christ, but profane and abuse it. There are many, alas ! to whom God has written the great things of his law, who not only neglect to read, hear and meditate upon it ; but can allow themselves to bring it into their ordinary conversation, in a wanton and irreverent manner, breaking their profane jests upon it. But let those who can allow themselves in such a practice, consider, that the word of Christ is an edge-tool, too sharp for them to sport themselves with. And that if mercy prevent not, they will find it to be so in their woful experience. The word of the Lord is a special letter of his great and dreadful name, the abuse and profanation of which, he will by no means suffer to go unpunished, *Exod. xx. 7.* “ The Lord will not hold them guiltless that taketh his name in vain.” The God-dishonouring sin of profaning and burlesquing the Scriptures, has brought heavy temporal calamities upon profane sinners, especially when it came to be general, *2 Chron. xxxvi. 16.* “ They mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words ; and misused his Prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, till there was no remedy.” This sin was very prevalent in the days of Isaiah the Prophet ; for which we find the Lord threatening to bring awful judgments upon Judah, *Isa. xxii. 13, 14.* The use that sinful people made of the warnings given them of approaching judgments, was to scoff at them, saying, *Let us*

eat and drink ; for to-morrow we shall die. And we see what was the issue ; saith the Prophet, *It was revealed in mine ears by the Lord of hosts, Surely this iniquity shall not be purged from you till ye die, saith the Lord of hosts.* And when the false prophets, profane priests, and those among the people who copied after their example, asked the Prophet Jeremiah in a scoffing manner, *What is the burden of the Lord ?* The Lord threatens to punish them, and their families, and to make every man's sword his own burden. It is much to be lamented that this sin prevails so much in our day. There are not a few amongst us, who seem to think they have no more occasion for the word of God, than to shew their profane wit by it.

2. The *second* use of the doctrine may be of trial and examination. What experience have you got of the powerful effects of the word of Christ upon your hearts ? Have you experienced the convincing and awakening virtue of it, letting you see your sin, and the misery it has laid you under ? What views have you got of the sin of your nature ; your original vileness and depravity ; that poisoned fountain, from whence all your actual transgressions do flow ? What views have you got of the sin of unbelief, that great and leading actual transgression ; the peculiar malignity of which lies in keeping men away from the remedy God has graciously provided against the malady of sin ? Has the Spirit of Christ convinced you of the unbelief of your hearts in particular ? What experience have you had of the exceeding greatness of the Divine power toward them that believe, in breaking the power of unbelief in your souls, and causing you to hope in the mercy of God venting through a slain Redeemer ? Do you at any time experience the comforting efficacy of the word ?

Is it really sweeter to your taste than honey from the comb? Can you say of it with the Prophet Jeremiah, Jerem. xv. 16. "Thy words were found, and I did eat them, and thy word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart? Are you really willing, denying your own wisdom, to be led by the word of Christ in the hand of his Spirit? Is your eye to the precept for direction in the way of duty, and to the promise for support? And do you esteem his precepts concerning all things to be right; desiring to have your hearts brought up to the word of Christ in all the parts of it, and no part of it brought down to your corrupt inclinations.—These are a few things whereby you may try how you stand affected to the word of Christ; and whether or not you have experienced the powerful efficacy of it on your souls.

3. The *third* use of the doctrine shall be in a word of exhortation. And,

(1.) We exhort you, who are the true subjects of the mighty Captain of our salvation, who have been subdued to the obedience of faith by the powerful efficacy of his word and Spirit, to be faithful to him; *endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. Fight the good fight of faith, and lay hold on eternal life, unto which you are called.* Though your enemies be many and mighty, remember that the Captain, under whose banner you fight, is *most mighty*. *The LORD of hosts is upon your side*, he is with you; *the God of Jacob is your refuge*. And so you may say with the Psalmist, in the face of the greatest danger and difficulty, Psal. xxiii. 4. "Yea, though I walk through the valley and shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

(2.) We exhort all who are yet at war with this *mighty One*, to take a believing view of the glory of his

his person, the greatness of his love, the riches of his grace, and suitableness of his offices to the condition of your souls; and drop the weapons of your rebellion at his feet. The sceptre of his grace and love is stretched out to you in the word of promise. He is presenting himself to you in the gospel, with *his sword girt on his thigh*, not as your enemy, but as your best friend, ready to take vengeance on all your spiritual enemies, and save you. Hence saith the Lord by the Prophet, Isa. xxxv. 4. "Say to them who are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: Behold your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence, he will come and save you." He will come with vengeance, a just recompence to all your soul enemies; but he will come and save you. He is come in his actual incarnation, and in the dispensation of the gospel, *not to condemn the world, but that the world through him may be saved*. Know then, O sinner, in this the day of *thy merciful visitation, the things which belong to thy peace, before they be hid from thine eyes*. The holy Ghost is yet saying, *To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts*. Take care how you treat the message of grace, and carry yourselves toward the word of Christ. All to whom he sends the gospel of his grace, must either be conquered by it, or wounded and slain. It must either be the *savour of life unto life*, to all who hear it, or of *death unto death*; not that the gospel has any thing in it, that tends to death in its own nature: What tendency it has to death, is owing to the sinner's unbelief and impenitency. Remember, therefore, that while you reject the offer of life and salvation, made you in the gospel, you are despising the greatest good, and running headlong to the greatest evil. We intreat you then, in the words of the Spirit of God,

God, James i. 21. "Lay apart all filthiness, and
"superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with
"meekness the ingrafted word, which is able to
"save your souls."

S E R M O N VI.

The CAPTAIN of Salvation riding prosperously in the Gospel-Chariot, and bringing terrible things to pass.

PSAL. xlv. 4.

And in thy majesty ride prosperously, because of truth, and meekness, and righteousness; and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things.

IN the preceding verse, our Lord Jesus Christ gets a commission to put on his armour, and be in readiness to exercise his mighty power, in protecting and defending his Church and people; and restraining and conquering all the enemies of his kingdom and government: And in the words now read, his success and prosperity, in the management of the affairs of his kingdom, is set before us. The Captain of our salvation is here supposed, not only to have girt on his glorious armour, but likewise to be making use of it; and giving the most striking proofs and evidences, that he is *most Mighty*. *In thy majesty ride prosperously, because of truth, and meekness, and righteousness; and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things.* Where more particularly, we may observe,

1. A commission given to Zion's King, by JEHOVAH the Father, to march forward in his glorious armour, speedily and successfully, in the management of the affairs of his kingdom, to the comfort of all his true subjects, and the confusion of all his and their enemies. *In thy majesty ride prosperously, because of truth*; or, upon the word of truth. Riding is a swift motion, you know, and this glorious person is frequently in Scripture, represented as managing the affairs of his Church in a riding posture, Rev. vi. 2. "I saw, and, behold, a white horse; and he that sat on him had a bow, and a crown was given unto him, and he went forth conquering, and to conquer." Chap. xix. 11. "I saw heaven opened, (saith John), and, behold, a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness doth he judge and make war." White horses were anciently used as an emblem of beauty, joy, fame, and triumph: *In thy majesty ride prosperously, or, thou shalt ride prosperously in thy majesty*, as it is in the last clause of the verse, *And thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things*. It is very frequent with the Hebrews, to put the imperative for the future tense; and express predictions in the form of commands. Thou shalt ride and prosper; thou shalt carry thine arms with success, from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth. And the combined force of earth and hell, shall not be able to check thy progress. *They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before thee, and thine enemies shall lick the dust*.

2. Agreeable to this figurative mode of expression, setting forth our Lord Jesus as in a riding posture, he must have whereupon to ride; and so the following words, *because of truth, and meekness, and righteousness*, may be viewed, either,

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As expressive of the cause for which he rides ; namely, to establish *truth, meekness, and righteousness, in the earth* ; or, they may be viewed as the reasons why he shall prosper, *viz. because of his truth, meekness and righteousness* ; or, which is very agreeable to the original, they may be considered as denoting that upon which he rides. The Captain of salvation rides upon the white horse of the glorious gospel, which, with the greatest propriety, may be called *the word of truth, meekness, and righteousness* : As the word of Christ is the sword he girds upon his thigh, it is also the chariot wherein he rides. The New Covenant consisting of great and precious promises, is that chariot of the wood of Lebanon, king Solomon made for himself.

3: We may observe, for what ends and purposes, this *mighty One* rides in the gospel-chariot. He does it to perform terrible things ; *thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things*. Thou shalt do great and glorious exploits, which shall be grievous and terrible to thine enemies, as the next verse explains it ; and this, not by great forces and the assistance of others, but by thine own single power : *Thine own right hand, and holy arm*, shall procure thee a complete victory over all thine enemies : Hence says our Lord, Isa. lxiii. 3. “ I have trodden the wine-press alone ; and of the people there was none with me : For I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury ; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment.” The things which were done by the Messiah at his first coming, it is true, were not terrible, but comfortable to all good men : To all the true fearers of the Lord, he was a *Sun of righteousness arising with healing under his wings*. But withal, they were
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terrible to the ungodly, and particularly to the body of the Jewish nation, to whom Christ was *a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence*, and an occasion of their utter destruction.

Upon that and other accounts, not only Christ's second, but even his first coming, is represented as dreadful, Joel ii. 30. Mal. iii. 2. "Thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things," that is, it shall work before thee; it shall bring great and interesting events to pass. With the arm of thy power thou shalt perform excellent things.

The doctrine we observe from these words, thus viewed, is,

Doct. Our Lord Jesus Christ brings great and terrible things to pass by means of the gospel. "And in thy majesty ride prosperously, because of truth, and meekness, and righteousness; and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things."

In speaking a little to this doctrine, the method proposed, as the Lord may be pleased to assist, is,

I. To endeavour a little to open and explain the various designations given to the gospel in the text.

II. Mention a few of these terrible things, our Lord Jesus brings to pass by means of the gospel.

III. Deduce some inferences for the application.

I. It was proposed, *first*, to endeavour a little to open and explain the various designations given to the gospel in the text.

Many are the endearing epithets which are given to the gospel in scripture. It is called *Good tidings of great joy*, Luke ii. 10, 11. *The word of reconciliation*, 2 Cor. v. 19. *The gospel of peace*, Eph. vi. 15. *The word of life*, Phil. ii. 16. *The unsearchable*

searchable riches of Christ, Eph. iii. 8. *The word of faith*, Rom. x. 18. It is a word to be believed, and the word whereby God is pleased to work faith in the hearts of his elect. It is called *the glorious gospel of the blessed God*, 2 Tim. i. 11. It is glorious in respect of its Author, the God of glory; glorious in respect of its great subject-matter, Christ humbled and exalted; and glorious in its effects on the hearts of men; making those who believe it, (however black and polluted by nature) to appear as doves, whose wings are covered with silver, and their feathers with yellow gold, Psal. lxxviii. 13. The gospel is called, *the power of God to salvation; a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation*, 1 Tim. i. 15. Those, with many other like names and characters, are given to the gospel, all denoting its incomparable excellency; and here it is called *the word of truth, the word of meekness and of righteousness*.

1. It is called *the word of truth*. The glorious Author of it is the *living and true God*, with whom it is impossible to lie, or to deceive. The glorious Publisher of it, who is also the great subject-matter contained in it, is the *Amen; The faithful and true witness*. The gospel is a most true and infallible word, highly worthy of the acceptation of all to whom it is sent: It is a word confirmed by the oath of God, the blood of his Son, and many notable miracles. But more particularly,

(1.) The gospel may be called *the word of truth*, as opposed to error and false doctrine, whereby Satan, the father of lies, endeavours to blind and ruin the souls of men: Unsound and corrupt doctrine, is one of the main bulwarks he makes use of for promoting the interests of the kingdom of darkness; and, that he may play off this engine with the greater success, he sometimes labours to make his falsehoods appear as like the truths of God as

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possible, that they may not be discerned by those for whom he lays the snare. The Apostle tells the Corinthians, that they had no cause to marvel, though they saw the ministers of Satan transforming themselves as the ministers of righteousness, when their master the devil could transform himself into an angel of light, 2 Cor. xi. 13, 14, 15. "Such are false Apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the Apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing, if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works." Satan is never a more dangerous enemy to the souls of men, than when he affects to speak as an angel of light: But whatever fair colouring he puts upon his false doctrines, they are still but chaff; and what is the chaff to the wheat? However specious the pretexts be, under which Satan and his agents may endeavour to make error appear; when it comes to be tried by the word of truth, it can no more stand before it, than Dagon could do before the Ark. Hence says our Lord to the angel, or ministry of the Church of Ephesus, Rev. ii. 2. "Thou hast tried them who say they are Apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars."

(2.) The gospel may be called *truth*, as opposed to the dispensation of grace which the Church enjoyed under the Mosaical œconomy; John i. 17. "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." Only let it be remembred, that when we speak of the gospel as opposed to the ceremonial dispensation, we do not mean that it is to be opposed thereto, as truth is opposed to error; but as truth is opposed to shadow: For to the fathers was the gospel preached, as well as unto us,

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Heb. iv. 2. Believers under the Old Testament dispensation, enjoyed the same privileges, for substance, with those we now enjoy; but they had them under the thick and dark vail of many ceremonies, which vail is done away in Christ. The law was the shadow of good things to come, but the body is of Christ; and Christ the substance being now exhibited, the gospel shines forth in its naked simplicity, without a vail; setting Christ before us in the most clear and conspicuous manner, as the true *paschal-lamb*, the true *scape-goat*, the true *manna*, and that *fulnefs that filleth all in all*.

(3.) The gospel may be called the word of truth, by way of eminency, in regard it is the most excellent, sweet, and desirable truth: There are no truths like these the gospel discovers unto us. The law is a word of truth in itself, most stable and permanent; but the discoveries it makes to sinful men are very terrible; it discovers sin, and the desert of it, but provides no remedy for the wounded spirit. But the gospel is a word of truth, pregnant with grace; it contains those truths, which, of all others, are the most noble and sublime, such as, that there is a Trinity of Persons in one undivided Godhead; the truths respecting the constitution of the Mediator's person; his undertaking in the New Covenant as our Surety; his fulness of grace and saving offices; the way wherein he hath procured our deliverance from sin, Satan, the world, and the wrath to come, and the way how rebels of Adam's fallen family may have their sins blotted out, be restored to the grace and favour of God, and enjoy eternal life. Now, as the truths revealed in the gospel are transcendently great, so they are of all truths the most sweet and amiable; sweeter than honey, even honey from the comb, Psal. xix. 10. What an inconceivable sweetness to faith, is there in that declaration our Lord Jesus has given us of the

the result of the Council of Peace, when he saith, John vi. 40. "This is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: And I will raise him up at the last day."

(4.) The gospel may be called *the word of truth*, in regard of its effects upon the hearts of those who believe it. Man is by nature a vain empty creature, there is no truth in him, Psal. lxii. 9. "Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie; to be laid in the balance, they are altogether lighter than vanity." But so soon as the word of the gospel reaches the heart, and the man is determined to give credit thereto, he is filled with truth in the hidden part; transformed by the *renewing of his mind*, and the image of God is drawn upon his soul. He no longer regards lying vanities, and despises his own mercies. The solid belief of the gospel, is not only accompanied with an inward change upon the understanding, will and affections; but also with newness of life and conversation. The man who believes the word of the gospel with particular appropriation, will find himself excited and animated thereby, to aim at a faithful and diligent performance of every duty he owes both to God and man. The gospel will not fail to bring forth the fruits of righteousness among those who hear, and know it in truth, Coloss. i. 6. The gospel when believed, teacheth men effectually to live godly in Christ Jesus. Hence saith the Apostle to Titus, chap. ii. 11, 12. "The grace of God" (that is, the gospel) "that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men; teaching us that denying ungodliness, and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly, in this present world." These are lessons the gospel does not teach men, merely by setting them before them;

them; but by furnishing them with grace, whereby they are enabled to perform the duties enjoined by the law, in a manner acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. There is a lively hope of salvation inseparably connected with the unfeigned belief of the gospel; and the Apostle tells us, 1 John iii. 3. "Every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as he" (*viz.* God) is pure." When a man is once blessed with begun likeness to God, he longs to have his spiritual beauty made perfect.

2. The gospel is called the *word of meekness*. And this designation is given to it for the following reasons:

(1.) The gospel may be called the *word of meekness*, in regard of him whose word it is. It is the word of the meek and lowly Jesus, who declares concerning himself, Matth. xi. 29. "I am meek and lowly in heart." Though Zion's King is the *only Potentate; the King of kings, and Lord of lords*, he is of all kings the most meek, lowly and condescending, Zech. ix. 9. He endured the most exquisite sufferings, both in soul and body, with astonishing meekness and patience. *He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: He suffered himself to be led as a lamb to the slaughter; gave his back to the smiters, and his cheeks to them that plucked off the hair. When he was reviled, he reviled not again, but quietly endured the contradiction of sinners against himself, to the astonishment of Pilate his unrighteous judge, Mark. xv. 3, 4, 5. He is meek and patient toward his own, under all their weakness and frailties; he does not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax; but exercises a most tender compassion toward the ignorant, and them that are out of the way. He carries the lambs of his flock in his bosom, and gently leads those that are with young, Isa. xl. 11. His meekness and patience*

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is admirably great, even toward his enemies; a most striking instance of which, we have in his carriage toward Judas, when he came to deliver him into the hands of his bloody persecutors, Matth. xxvi. 50. And toward one of the most daring and forward of those who came to apprehend him in the garden, Luke xxii. 51. How ready was he to render good for evil? And shew his compassion to those by whom he was despitefully used? Neither is his meekness and patience less admirable in his now exalted state; for he bears long with sinners, and keeps up the treaty of peace with them, even when they stand chargeable with despising his compassionate counsel against themselves.

(2.) The gospel may be called the *word of meekness*, when we consider the manner in which it was delivered to us by Christ and his Apostles. The law was given on mount Sinai, attended with many signs of terrible majesty. The Lawgiver appeared in flaming fire, attended with blackness, and darkness, and the sound of a trumpet, as you see, Heb. xii. 19, 20. and the Apostle adds, verse 21. so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, "I exceedingly fear and quake. The sight behoved to be terrible indeed, that could have such an effect upon Moses, a man so much acquainted with, and inured to Divine revelations. The law, and the tremendous manner in which it was delivered to Israel, is called the *ministration of death and condemnation*, 2 Cor. iii. 7, 9. But the word of the gospel is delivered to us, in the most sweet, pleasant and endearing manner. It is a *still small voice*, telling the daughters of Zion, *Behold thy King cometh unto thee, meek, sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass*. And the Apostle Paul, when directing Timothy how to preach the gospel, saith, 2 Tim. ii. 24, 25. "The servant of the Lord must not strive; but be
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“gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient; in
 “meekness instructing them that oppose themselves;
 “if God peradventure will give them repent-
 “ance to the acknowledging of the truth.” The
 gospel is accordingly said to drop upon men as the
 dew, and as the small rain on the tender herbs, Deut.
 xxxii. 1, 2. and Psal. lxxii. 6. Christ is promised
 to come down in the dispensation of it, like rain
 upon the mown grass, and the showers that water the
 earth. God speaks in the law, as a God of terrible
 majesty; but in the gospel as IMMANUEL God with
 us; God on our side, and pacified toward us, in
 Christ, notwithstanding all that we have done. O
 how sweet is that summary of the gospel, we have
 in the declaration God the Father makes concern-
 ing our Lord Jesus, at his baptism, Matth. iii. 17.
 “And, lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is my
 “beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” The
 gospel is just a declaration, that God is pleased,
 yea, well pleased in his beloved Son; well pleased
 for his righteousness sake; well pleased to take sin-
 ners into his grace and favour through him, what-
 ever they have been, or done. And no sooner is a
 sinner determined by the power of divine grace, to
 be pleased with Christ, as his Saviour from sin and
 wrath, than an eternal peace commences between
 God and him. Hence you see what he says to
 all who are pleased with his beloved Son, Isa. liv.
 10. “The mountains shall depart, and the hills be
 “removed; but my kindness shall not depart from
 “thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be re-
 “moved, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee.”

3. The gospel may be called the word of meekness,
 in respect of its design, and the end which through
 the divine blessing, it reaches among men. The
 design of it is to meeken, and soften mens hearts.
 It is a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces; and
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when it is believed, it changes the dispositions of men, causing "the wolf to dwell with the lamb, "the leopard to lie down with the kid, and "the lion to eat straw like the ox," Isa. xi. 6, 7. The sense of these metaphorical expressions, seems evidently to be, that men of fierce, cruel and ungovernable dispositions, shall be so transformed by the preaching of the gospel, and the grace of Christ, that they shall become most humble, gentle and tractable, and shall no more vex and persecute God's meek and poor ones, such as these mentioned verse 4th; but shall become such as they, of which we have instances in a persecuting Saul being made a preaching Paul, and the conversion of the rugged jailor, Acts xvi. with innumerable others. Many sinners of the first rank, have been brought, by means of the gospel, to be the most eminent saints.

3. The gospel is called the *word of righteousness*. And,

(1.) It may be designed so on account of its purity and holiness: The gospel is a doctrine according to godliness. Hence we read of the holy promise or covenant, Luke i. 72. and Psal. cv. 42. The promises are holy, and they are given to us, that we, through the faith of them, may be made partakers of a divine nature, 2 Pet. i. 4. The Apostle Paul tells us, that God purposed from eternity, to sanctify those he was pleased to make choice of to everlasting life, through the *belief* of the *truth*, 2 Thess. ii. 13. Every truth revealed in the gospel, and every promise it contains, may be said, in an eminent manner, to have this inscription upon it, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD. His holiness and righteousness are set before us, in the most illustrious manner by the gospel. The holiness of God is declared in his law; both in the precepts and threatnings

threatnings thereof : We may read it, in all the judgments he has inflicted upon persons and nations, on account of sin ; but no where have we such a striking evidence of it, as in the sufferings of Christ, exhibited to us in the gospel.

(2.) The gospel may be called the *word of righteousness*, because it contains a revelation of the righteousness of God our Saviour, which is the alone ground of a sinner's access to, and acceptance in the sight of an holy and just God ; yea, the leading design of the gospel, in subordination to the glory of its Author, is to proclaim that righteousness to sinners ; to set it before them, as the sure foundation of all their hope and confidence, Isa. xlv. 12, 13. And the work of a gospel-ministry, is to declare the truth of God, in accomplishing the promise of sending his Son to be the *propitiation for our sins*, and that righteousness he has wrought out, consisting in the holiness of his human nature, perfect conformity to the law in his life, and satisfaction for sin, in his sufferings and death. That the gospel reveals this righteousness, was the reason the Apostle Paul gave, why he was so far from being ashamed of it, (notwithstanding the reproach, shame and sufferings, to which his preaching and professing it, did expose him), that he gloried in it : Hence says he, Rom. i. 16. " I am not ashamed
" of the gospel of Christ ; for it is the power of
" God unto salvation, to every one that believeth ;
" to the Jew first, and also to the Greek : For
" therein is the righteousness of God revealed from
" faith to faith." The righteousness of Christ, who is God, is revealed in the gospel from faith to faith ; from the faithfulness of God, to the faith of men ; from one degree of faith in believers to another ; from the faith of the Church under the Old Testament, to the faith of the Church under the

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New; from the faith of one generation, to the faith of another, in all succeeding generations. The gospel has been the same for substance in all ages, and will continue to be so; and the righteousness it has been revealing, is the same. Men may lay as many foundations to build upon for eternal life as they please, but the gospel never did, and never will lay another than Christ, and him crucified; Acts iv. 12. "Neither is their salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven whereby we must be saved."

(3.) The gospel may be called the *word of righteousness*, in respect of its effect. When the record of God concerning Christ is received by faith, it has a purifying effect upon the heart. The word of the gospel is the mean by which the Holy Spirit conveys that grace into the soul, which effectually "teacheth men to deny ungodliness, and worldly lusts, and live as the sons of God, harmless and without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation." Hence the Apostle tells the Galatians, "that they received not the Spirit by the works of the law, but by the hearing of faith," Gal. iii. 2. It is by looking into the glass of the gospel by faith, that the good work of likeness and conformity to Christ is begun in regeneration, and is carried on to perfection, 2 Cor. iii. 18. "We all with open face beholding as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

II. The *second* thing in the method was, to mention some of these *terrible things*, our Lord Jesus brings to pass by means of the gospel. Now these things are great and glorious; all worthy of him that *rides upon the white horse* of the gospel; and when they are designed *terrible things*, they are so called

called with reference to the enemies of Christ; for they are as full of *comfort* to his *friends*, as of *terror* to his *foes*. We shall mention only a few of them. And,

1. One of these *terrible things* which the hand and power of Christ has brought to pass by means of the gospel, is the unhinging and removing the whole fabric of ceremonial institutions. This was foretold in prophecy as an event that would be very terrible, and astonishing to the Jewish nation, Hag. ii. 6. "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land." So terrible was this event to the greater part of the nation of the Jews, that they struggled to the uttermost of their power to oppose it; as you may see in the history of the Acts of the Apostles. The Jews contended for the monopoly of the external privilege, at least of being the peculiar people of God, and persecuted our Lord, his Disciples and followers, as enemies to God, and despisers of Moses, because they preached the gospel to the Gentiles. The Jews had been long surrounded by the rough wall of the ceremonial law, and had the exclusive enjoyment of the privileges of the Church, a few proselytes from among the Gentiles excepted: Thus, when our Lord came and brake down that wall, that he might make both Jew and Gentile *one new man*; it was an event very terrible to the Jews. But how distracting and amazing soever it was to them, and particularly to the corrupt ministry, wherewith the Church was generally filled at the time our Lord appeared in human nature; it was an event most advantageous and comfortable to the Gentiles, and would have been so to the Jews also, had they not been so much sunk in the mire of carnal policy, and

and earthly notions about the nature of the Messiah's kingdom.

2. Our Lord has made *terrible* work upon the kingdom and interests of Satan, by means of the gospel. He came into the world, became a partaker of *flesh and blood*, that by his obedience, sufferings and death, he might destroy the devil and his works, which he did upon the cross in point of merit, Col. ii. 15. And by the dispensation of the gospel, he is prosecuting the prince of darkness, and will not quit the field, till he cast him and his works both into the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone. When the Captain of salvation mounted the white horse of the glorious gospel in the ministry of the Apostles, visiting the Gentiles, to take a people from among them for himself; pulling down heathenish superstitions and idolatry, to the horror of Satan, and those engaged under him for the support of it; the gates of hell were made to tremble, and the old serpent, who had so long deceived the nations, to fall as lightening from heaven; and multitudes of his subjects were mercifully turned from idols, to serve the living God, and wait for his Son from heaven, even Jesus who delivereth us *from the wrath to come*.

3. The preaching of the gospel by our Lord and his Apostles, was followed with *terrible* consequences to his ancient people, to whom it was first published, because of their unbelief in rejecting the compassionate counsel of God against themselves. Our Lord Jesus came to his own, but they received him not; this was the woful case with the generality of them; and thus it came to pass, that his coming was attended with the falling, as well as the raising again of many in Israel, Luke ii. 34. And elsewhere, our Lord saith, "for judgment I am
" come into this world; that they which see not,
" might

"might see; and that they which see, might be made blind." The Prophet Malachi, prophesying of the coming of the Messiah, declares how awful that event would prove to the greater part of God's professing people, Mal. iii. 2. That event in itself considered, was of all the most to be desired; for Christ came "not to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved," John iii. 17. And, as the greater any mercy is, that a person or people is favoured with, the heavier are the judgments the Lord inflicts upon them, if they slight and abuse it, so it fared with the bulk of the Jewish nation. They opposed Christ in his personal ministry among them, to the degree of embruing their hands in his guiltless blood; and after his resurrection, persecuted his Disciples and followers, till wrath came upon them, to the uttermost, 1 Theff. ii. 16. When the Lord did not only shake the heaven of their Church-state, but also unhinged their civil polity, in their destruction by the Romans, about forty years after our Lord's ascension; to which dreadful event, the Apostle seems primarily to refer, when he saith, Heb. x. 12, 13. "But this man, after he had offered up one sacrifice for sin, for ever sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his foot-stool."

4. Another of the *terrible things* our Lord Jesus has performed by means of the gospel, is the inroads he has made upon the kingdom and power of Antichrist. He did great things this way, at our Reformation from popery, on account of which we have cause to be glad. He then shook the kingdom of graven images, to the degree that a tenth part of it might be said to have fallen, Rev. xi. 13. That was indeed a terrible event to the *man of sin, and son of perdition*; and as he has be-

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gun to fall before the Captain of our salvation, he will continue to prosecute him to his utter ruin and destruction. And whatever mean the Lord may be pleased to make use of, for procuring access to the gospel, among the supporters of the Romish hierarchy, it is evident that the pure and faithful preaching of the gospel, is to be the great mean whereby he will have it brought down. Antichrist is that *wicked one* whom the Apostle saith, (2 Thess. ii. 8.) "the Lord shall consume with the Spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." And though we know not when this at once terrible and desirable event will take place, because God has not told us, we have reason to apprehend, it is not at a great distance, whatever dark clouds may intervene betwixt this and the dawning of that morning, so much to be desired.

5. and *lastly*, Our Lord Jesus performs *terrible things* upon the hearts and consciences of obstinate sinners, by means of a dispensation of the gospel. We see what terrible effects the word of God, and the judgments denounced in it, have had upon men of all ranks and conditions of life. Kings of the earth, great men, rich men, chief captains, mighty men, bond men and free, have been made to hide themselves in the dens and rocks of the mountains, and to say to the mountains and rocks, *fall on us and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb*, Rev. vi. 15, 16. The judge on the bench, has been made to tremble before the prisoner at the bar, when he was making use of no other weapon but the word of God, as we see was the case when the Apostle Paul preached the gospel before Felix, Acts xxiv. 25. "As he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled,"

"bled," &c. IMMANUEL's arrows are sharp in the hearts of his enemies; and where the waters of the sanctuary have not a healing effect, they will have wounding and killing consequences. Wherever the gospel is sent in purity, its effects and consequences are of all the most interesting; it will either prove the *savour of life unto life, or of death unto death*, to all who are privileged with a dispensation of it. Great also, and terrible are the effects of the word of Christ upon the consciences of many of those who are at length overcome and subdued by it, ere they are prevailed upon to drop the weapons of their rebellion at his feet, and submit to the sceptre of his grace, as the Psalmist declares in the following verse of this Psalm.

III. The *third* head proposed in the method, was, to deduce some inferences for the application.

1. Then, we may infer from what has been said, that the gospel is a subject very glorious and excellent. It is the *word of truth, meekness and righteousness*, the sceptre of IMMANUEL's kingdom, the chariot in which he rides, and the sword of his excellency, by which he *performs excellent things*. The gracious purposes of God toward fallen and ruined sinners of Adam's family, are disclosed by it. It contains a revelation of the *unsearchable riches of Christ*, Eph. iii. 8. It is a lamp ordained of God, to give us the light and knowledge of Christ, and the divine kindness through him, Psal. cxxxii. 17. *Life and immortality are brought to light by the gospel*. It sets Jesus Christ before us, as *made of God to us, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption*.

2. We may infer, how much the gospel ought to be prized and esteemed by all who enjoy it in purity; and the great sin of despising and neglecting it. The gospel is good news, *glad tidings of great*

great joy unto all people; tidings of peace; the word of life, declaring to sinners, "that God is in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them," 2 Cor. v. 19. And that he hath made his own eternal Son to be *sin for us*; or a sin-offering in the room and stead of sinners, that they might be made *the righteousness of God in him*. The gospel reveals and brings near a righteousness to sinners, on the footing of which, they may appear with acceptance in the presence of a holy God. It is that grace of God that brings salvation, and by which he teaches men effectually, *to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts*, live to his praise, their own comfort, and the edification of others, in the present evil world. *Blessed are the people who know the joyful sound*; know it, so as to make a believing improvement of it. And who can conceive the misery of those who despise and make light of the grace exhibited in it. O that such would consider how they expect to escape, neglecting *so great a salvation!* Heb. ii. 3. Gospel-hearers who shall be found in the end, to have been gospel-despisers, will be plunged into a far greater depth of horror and misery, than those who never heard of Christ, and the way of life and salvation through him; as our Lord declares to those who despised his personal ministry, Matth. xi. 20,—25. Let all then take heed, what entertainment they give to the gospel, and tremble at the thought of its being said to them, *Behold ye despisers, and wonder, and perish.*

3. We may see the great need, all who enjoy a dispensation of the gospel have to exercise a constant dependence upon the power and grace of Christ, in order to their profiting by it. The revelation of his arm and power, is absolutely necessary to make the gospel effectual to salvation: It is
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when he rides in the chariot of the wood of Lebanon, that sinners are taken up into it. The gospel is the mean and instrument, whereby notable things are brought to pass; but it is the hand of Christ that performs them. The *treasure* of the gospel is *put into earthen vessels*, but *the excellency of the power is of God*. Whatever instruments he is pleased to employ, in planting and watering his vineyard, the increase is from himself. Ministers of the gospel are to have their eye to him constantly for all their furniture and success, in publishing the *word of truth, meekness and righteousness*; and the hearers thereof, as ever they would profit by it, are earnestly to pray for the exertion of his power, which only can make it effectually reach their hearts, and prove the real mean of their conversion, comfort, and upbuilding in holiness, *through faith unto salvation*. And that ministers and people are so little exercised this way, may at once be considered as a special cause why the gospel has so little success in our day, and a sad sign of our barrenness under the means of grace.

4. We may see from this subject, that our Lord Jesus is not only succeeding in the management of the affairs of his kingdom of grace, but hastening to finish the mystery of God in the Church; he is riding in the gospel-chariot with great celerity; *He must increase*: For *he is King of kings, and Lord of lords*. *There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth on the heavens in the help of his people, and in his excellency on the sky*, Deut. xxxiii.

26. He is prosperous in all his undertakings. *The pleasure of the Lord hath prospered in his hand*, in the purchase of redemption; and it is doing so likewise in the application of it. He is riding and prospering; and however much his work may be underground at any time, as to our view, it is still

going forward, and must do so, until he *see the travel of his soul* in one body, and *be satisfied*. Seeing the Father is saying to him, as in the text, *ride thou, prosper thou*; or, “thou shalt ride prosperously, upon the word of truth, meekness and righteousness; and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things.”

5. Is the Captain of salvation riding in the chariot of the glorious gospel, and so hastening forward his work? Then we may see with what holy diligence it concerns all the hearers of the gospel, to improve their day of grace, and merciful visitation. The day of grace is hastening to a period; it is a limited day, and the present time only is ours: Let none therefore trust to *to-morrow*, as they *know not what a day may bring forth*. “Wherefore brethren suffer the word of exhortation.” Heb. vi. 11, 12. “We desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence, (with believers who have gone before us,) to the full assurance of hope unto the end: That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises.”

6. We may see matter of trial and examination. It is certainly the duty of gospel-hearers frequently to try whether or not they are reaping saving benefit by the gospel. Try then what acquaintance you have with the designations given to the gospel in the text, in your experience. Have you been brought by grace, to credit and rest upon the word of the gospel as a true and faithful word? Have you been determined with the Apostle Paul, to say, *It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, and of your acceptance in particular, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, not excepting the chief of them?* Is there any word of promise, concerning which you can say with the

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the Psalmist, as in Psal. cxix. 49, 50. "Remember the word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope. This is my comfort in mine affliction: For thy word hath quickened me." What experience have you of the gospel as the *word of meekness*? Have your hearts, which are naturally harder than the nether millstone, been softened by it, and the enmity of them slain? Whereas you were once, as the wild ass's colt, used to the wilderness, stubborn and untractable, are you now disposed to submit to that righteousness the gospel reveals, and take on the yoke of Christ, give up yourselves to him, to be taught, led, and directed by him, to the land of uprightness? Do you desire and pray for the success and prosperity of his kingdom? And do you desire, more and more, to experience the quickening, sanctifying, comforting, strengthening, establishing, sin-mortifying, and soul-purifying efficacy of the word of the gospel upon your hearts?

7. We may see, from what has been said, matter of comfort to believers. It may comfort the heart of every child of God, to consider that the Captain of salvation is making way for his second coming, and the accomplishment of the promise, which will crown his felicity, John xiv. 2, 3. "I go to prepare a place for you.—And I will come again, and receive you to myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." Believers, the Captain of your salvation is, by all the dispensations of his grace and providence, hastening on the day of your complete deliverance; and whatever reelings and commotions may take place in the world, they are but only making way for the manifestation of the sons of God, in all that glory that was prepared for them, before the world began. "Yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and

“and will not tarry.” Therefore amidst all your present trials, from your remaining corruption, Satan, and the world, it is your duty and interest, to comply with our Lord’s exhortation to his Disciples, when warning them of the perils of the last times, Luke xxi. 28. “When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.” There is much confusion in the Church already; and something very interesting with respect to the State, would seem to be on the wheel; *but in patience possess your souls*. All things must work for his glory that rides in the gospel-chariot, and your real good.

8. We may see matter of reproof and terror, to all the scoffers of the last times. The last times are in many respects the best times; but ungodly men are often worst when the times are best. When the light of the gospel, the knowledge of God, and the means of grace are most abundant, the wicked are most wicked. For as the means of grace can make no man good of themselves; so, when men spurn at the light, and oppose themselves to the means of grace, they prove the occasion of their being far worse than if they enjoyed them not. The Apostle warns us of the *coming of scoffers in the last days, walking after their own lust*, 2 Pet. iii. 3. Persons disposed to scoff at religion, and the professors thereof, yea, at God himself, his commandments, promises, and threatened judgments, and particularly, at the promise of his second coming, saying, “Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.” There were some disposed to mock at the promise of our Lord’s first coming, reproaching the footsteps of God’s anointed

ed, Psal. lxxxix. 51.; because it was long betwixt the time of the promise of his coming being made, and the accomplishment of it. And they are not wanting, who can sport themselves with the promise of his second appearing. Yea, it is matter of deep lamentation, that many even of those who profess to believe there is a judgment to come, talk, act, and walk, in such a manner, as really declares to the world, they believe no such thing; or at least that they could wish the thought of it were entirely banished from their minds. Such would do well to consider, ere it be too late, that our Lord Jesus *will not be slack to accomplish the promise of his second coming*, to the comfort of his friends, and the *confusion* of his and their enemies. He is now riding in the gospel-chariot, gathering together *the travel of his soul*, and when that work is once accomplished, *he will come in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory, when every eye shall see him, and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him*; and those of all kindreds of the earth, in a special manner, who have been favoured with the means of grace, and yet so far lost to any proper sense of the worth and value of their precious privileges, as to set their mouths against the heavens, in profane mocking of God, his word, ordinances, servants, and people.

9. and *lastly*, We may infer matter of exhortation. And,

1. We exhort all who have experienced the power of divine grace upon their hearts, and known the joyful sound of the gospel in truth, to bless a God of infinite love and grace, for sending the gospel to them, and that *not only in word, but in the demonstration of the Holy Spirit*. You have great reason to be thankful, and to walk humbly with your God. Blessed are your eyes, for they see

see the glory and excellency of these things, which are hid from the greater part of the wise and prudent. We exhort you to grow in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. And to seek to have a more intimate sense of the enlightening, meekening, and soul-transforming efficacy of the gospel upon your hearts. Be much taken up in looking to glorious Christ in the glass of the gospel; you cannot see him but in the promise, nor see the promises to your real comfort, but as you see them in him; and you never get a view of him by the eye of faith, but your conformity to him will, in some measure, be promoted, 2 Cor. iii. 18. You may be exhorted *to walk worthy of the Lord, to all well-pleasing*, that is, endeavouring to *please him in all things*. *Adorning the doctrine of God your Saviour*, by a life and conversation evidencing that *you know the grace of God in truth*. Be exhorted to go forth to duty and difficulty daily in the strength of that grace the gospel reveals, keeping, as it were your one eye on the precept for direction, and the other on the promise for your support and through-bearing in the way of duty.

2. As for you, who, though you are enjoying a dispensation of the gospel, have never yet experienced the salutary effects of it upon your hearts. We exhort you to consider the great misery of your present condition; if the gospel be hid from you, it is because Satan the god of this world, has blinded your minds, and hardened your hearts. Jesus Christ is coming to you from Sabbath to Sabbath in the gospel-chariot, saying, *Behold me, behold me*, Isa. lxxv. 2. *Look unto me and be ye saved*. He has been long among you as one that serveth, saying to you, *What will ye, that I shall do unto you?* but you have not received eyes to see, nor hearts to understand, to this day. You are asleep within the flood-mark of the
wrath

wrath and displeasure of Almighty God, and inexpressibly dreadful will your case be for eternity, if you are not awaked in time, to a sense of your sin and danger; and to see the things which belong to your peace, before they are hid from your eyes. Arise then, *O sleeper, and call upon thy God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness at the first, that he may shine into thy heart, to give thee the light of the knowledge of his glory in the face of Jesus Christ.* You have his gracious promise to plead, as your warrant and encouragement, to expect he will do it, Isa. xxv. 7. "He will destroy
" in this mountain, the face of the covering cast
" over all people, and the vail that is spread over
" all nations." Seek that he may kindly determine you, to give credit to the promise, and then *shall you see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God.* Then *shall you see the King in his beauty,* and take up with the *word of truth, meekness and righteousness,* and the precious things it contains and makes known, as your enriching treasure, both in this, and in the world to come.

S E R.

S E R M O N VII.

The Arrows of Zion's KING, sharp in the Hearts of his Enemies, and the People falling in subjection under him.

PSAL. xlv. 5.

Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the King's enemies ; whereby the people fall under thee.

OUR Lord Jesus is a man of war, and the warfare wherein he is engaged, is very honourable. He fights for the glory of God, and the eternal salvation of men; and these are objects truly great and interesting. The sword he makes use of is his word, which is also the chariot wherein he rides, *conquering and to conquer*. Now, when he whose name is the *most Mighty*, girds on his sword, and mounts his chariot of state, as we see him doing in the two preceding verses; we may justly expect to hear, that *great and terrible things* are performed by his hand. God the Father had said to him, *Thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things*, it shall bring events great and wonderful to pass, which shall prove terrible indeed to all thine enemies, but most comforting to all thy friends. The words now read, contain an account of these *terrible things* our Lord Jesus brings to pass by means of a gospel-dispensation. “Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the King's enemies; whereby the people fall under thee.” Where,

1. We may observe the person speaking to the Captain of our salvation; namely, **JEHOVAH**, in the person of the Father, at whose appointment the

the work of our redemption was undertaken by Christ, as our Surety and Redeemer, and who has, from all eternity, determined, in what places of the world the gospel shall be preached; how long it shall be continued in any particular place; what persons shall reap saving benefit by it; who shall be the instruments, by whom it shall be preached; and what fruit and success their ministry shall have among those to whom they are sent. All those things God hath settled from everlasting: "For known unto him are all things from the beginning," Acts xv. 18. And what he saith here to the Captain of our salvation, may be viewed as a prediction of the great success the gospel was to have, particularly among the Gentile nations, when he should ride forth amongst them, in the ministry of his Apostles, &c. to visit and take out of them a people for himself.

2. We may observe the subject spoken of, the arrows, wherewith this glorious Warrior has his quiver filled, *Thine arrows are sharp, &c.* Arms are frequently ascribed to Christ in Scripture, such as sword, bow and arrows, which are to be understood in a metaphorical sense, after the manner of men engaged in war, who often find these weapons useful, both in defending themselves from, and offending their enemies. By *arrows* here, we are to understand the same thing on the matter, as by *sword*, namely, *the word of Christ*, whereby he conquers and subdues his enemies to himself. The title of *arrows* is very frequently given to *words* in Scripture, Psal. lxiv. 4.; and to the judgments of God, which he inflicts upon his enemies according to his word, Deut. xxxii. 23. and on account of their abuse and misimprovement of it.

3. It is affirmed of these arrows, that they are *sharp*: The word of Christ is compared to a *sharp*

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two-edged sword, which is said to *proceed out of his mouth*; and which the Apostle saith is *sharper than any two-edged sword*, Heb. iv. 12. Christ's arrows do not fail to accomplish the end for which he sends them; they are like the sword of Saul, and bow of Jonathan, which returned not empty from the fat of the slain, and the blood of the mighty. His word will prove either *the favour of life unto life*, or of *death unto death*, to all to whom it is sent.

4. We may observe where it is that these arrows have their effect; where their sharpness is experienced; and that is, in the hearts of the King's enemies. "Thine arrows are sharp in the hearts of the King's enemies." He who made the heart, has access to it, and can open it, to receive his word. Men can bring the means of conviction no farther than the outward ear, but Christ can direct his arrows to the heart. His word, when accompanied by his Spirit, is "quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart;" as in that forecited, Heb. iv. 12.

5. We may observe the evidence given, that Christ's arrows are sharp in the hearts of his enemies, and that is, that *the people fall under him*. "Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the King's enemies; whereby the people fall under thee."

By the *King's enemies*, and the *people* who are said to fall under him, the same persons are intended. And the enemies of Christ may be said to *fall under him*, in a twofold respect, either as slain by his arrows, or as prostrate at his feet, as men overcome in the field of battle, yield themselves up to the conqueror; and, as rebellious subjects, subdued by

by their rightful Sovereign, lay down the weapons of their rebellion, and return to their dutiful allegiance to their Prince, availing themselves of the act of grace, and sincerely repenting the sin and folly they have been chargeable with. Many fall before the word of Christ, so as never to rise again. They are hewn by his Prophets, and slain by the words of his mouth, and the judgments thereby denounced. While others so fall under him, as that their fall only makes way for their everlasting exaltation. Those Christ wounds, that he may heal them; and kills that he may make them alive. He acquaints them most intimately with their wounded and deadly condition by nature, by sending the law closely home upon the conscience, that he may heal them by the grace of the gospel. It is this working of Christ, by means of his word and Spirit, whereby he brings his enemies to become his friends, to which we shall chiefly have an eye, in the following discourse. And the doctrine we observe from the words is,

Doct. Our Lord Jesus Christ, the King of Zion, brings those who are by nature his enemies, to become his friends, and willing subjects, by means of the gospel. “Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the King’s enemies; whereby the people fall under thee.” Psal. cx. 3. “Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: Thou hast the dew of thy youth;” or, as the words may be read, more agreeable to the original, “Thy people shall be freewill-offerings, in the day of thy forces, in the beauties of the sanctuary, more than the womb of the morning shall thy youth, or thy young men be to thee: Thy people shall present themselves willingly to thee, as living sacrifices,” Rom. xii. 1. When thou shalt

shalt raise thy forces, consisting of Apostles and other preachers of the gospel, and send them forth to conquer the world unto thyself; they shall present themselves to thee, in the beautiful sanctuary, namely the Gospel-church, the antitype of the worldly sanctuary; and thy spiritual seed and progeny, shall be more numerous than the drops of dew, that fall from the womb of the morning.

The method we shall observe in discoursing further from this text and doctrine, is,

I. To enquire who may be said to be Christ's enemies.

II. Speak a little of that work of Christ, which consists in his making his enemies become his friends, by means of the gospel.

III. Offer some thoughts upon the effect of that work; or speak of the people, their falling under Christ, in the way of kindly subjecting themselves to his sceptre and government.

IV. Apply. And all is proposed as the Lord may direct.

I. It was proposed to enquire who may be said to be Christ's enemies. And, in general, we may observe, that he has as many enemies as there are devils in hell, and irregenerate men upon earth. It is the woful condition of all men by nature, that they are enemies to Christ. All those who are now his friends, and willing subjects, were once to be found in the camp of his enemies. Hence says the Apostle to the Colossians, "You who were sometimes alienated, and enemies in your mind, by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled," Coloss. i. 21. The minds of men are naturally full of enmity against God, which enmity discovers

discovers itself by wicked works. Yea, the heart of man is so full of enmity against God, that the carnal mind is called *enmity*, in the very abstract; Rom. viii. 7. "The carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." What a woful account is this we have of the heart of man, especially when we consider, that it is given by one whose judgment is always according to truth! There is something in the heart of every man, that is not, neither can be subject to God's just and holy law. But thanks be to God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, though the enmity of man's heart cannot be subjected to his law, it can be slain, and destroyed by the cross of his Son, and the efficacy of his Spirit. Should it then be enquired, What way do men evidence their enmity at Christ? We answer,

1. By setting up their own wisdom, and carnal reasonings, in opposition to the revelation he has made of his Father's will to us in the gospel. The great things the gospel makes known to us, are reckoned foolishness by the natural man, 1 Cor. ii. 14. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." The man that has nothing supernatural about him, *receiveth not*, that is, *approveth not*, but opposeth the things of the Spirit of God, esteeming them weak and foolish matters, and the reason is, *he knows them not*. They are things which can only be discerned by the spiritual eye; and while the man is in his natural state, he is entirely destitute of that visive faculty; blind and cannot see afar off; accordingly, he denies the authority of Christ, as the Messenger of the New Covenant, and the Apostle of our profession; rebels against the light and testimony of his Spirit;

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stopping his ear against the charming voice of the gospel, by refusing to *hear him that speaketh from heaven*, Heb. xii. 25. Nay, so long as a man is under the power of corrupt nature, he is disposed to receive the testimony of the vilest impostor, rather than his, who is the *Amen, The faithful and true witness*. So we find our Lord declares concerning the unbelieving Jews, John v. 43. "I am come" (says he) "in my Father's name, and you receive me not. If another shall come in his own name, him you will receive." As the man who is savingly enlightened in the knowledge of Christ, counts *all things dung for the excellency of the knowledge of him*, Phil. iii. 8. so the natural man counts the person, office and doctrine of Christ, mere empty things, in comparison of the excellency he thinks he sees in self-wisdom.

2. Men evidence their enmity at Christ, by refusing to submit to his righteousness revealed in the gospel, Rom. x. 3. It is natural for every man, to go about to establish a righteousness of his own, to the disparagement of the grace of God. The gospel sets forth Christ as the "end of the law for righteousness," to every hearer of it. But no man can naturally think of being saved by the righteousness of another; he had rather submit to the heavy and unprofitable, nay, soul-destroying methods, the man of sin imposes upon his followers, in order to their attaining to righteousness, than be indebted to the Saviour for it. And indeed, there is no way whereby the enmity of mens hearts discovers itself more against Christ, than by rejecting his righteousness. For while men endeavour to work out a righteousness of their own, they charge the highest act of folly upon the glorious Redeemer, saying, on the matter, He laid down his life to procure that righteousness and salvation for sinners, which

which they could have done for themselves. Every attempt to establish a righteousness of our own, is a saying, on the matter, that Christ assumed our nature, gave obedience to the law, and satisfied the demands of justice, without a cause. Hence, saith the Apostle, Gal. ii. 21. "If righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain."

3. They do it by declining his yoke, and refusing to take on his burden. The Legalist would indeed seem to pay more regard to the law, than to the righteousness of Christ; or to Christ in his kingly, than in his priestly office, and yet his heart is equally averse to him in both; for while he endeavours to recommend himself to God for acceptance upon the footing of his own obedience to the law, he is in reality, the greatest Antinomian, the greatest enemy to the law; at once betraying his ignorance of the law, and discovering the contemptible thoughts he has of it, by thus proposing to put it off with the filthy rags of his own righteousness. Whatever regard men may pretend to have for the law of God, their hearts can never be subject to it, until they are brought to submit to the surety righteousness of our Lord Jesus; till then his yoke must appear grievous to them, and his burden altogether unsupportable. And the language of their hearts cannot fail to be, *We will not have this man to reign over us. Who is the Lord that we should obey him?*

Every man and woman by nature, hath the same disposition toward the Lord and his Anointed, with those we read of, Psal. ii. 3. they say, "Let us break their bands asunder, and cast their cords from us." Whatever obedience to the law, any perform, while in their natural state, they are either driven to it by the lashes of a natural conscience, or influenced by the servile hopes of a reward. The duties they perform, do not spring from faith in Christ,

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love to him, and real regard to his authority, nor is the glory of God the end to which they are directed.

4. Many evidence the enmity of their hearts at Christ, by neglecting and despising his ordinances. The preaching of the gospel is accounted foolishness by men in their irregenerate state; and the more natural wit and sagacity they are endowed with, the more foolish does that ordinance appear in their eye; as the Apostle shews at great length, in the first and second chapters of his first epistle to the Corinthians. And as men naturally despise the preaching of the gospel, and reckon it foolishness; they can stand no better affected to any other ordinance of divine appointment. It is truly lamentable to see so many evidencing their enmity against Christ, by neglecting and despising his ordinances, in a land wherein they have been generally received. Many evidence their contempt of them, by an almost total abstinence therefrom. Breach of Sabbath, and neglect of divine ordinances, are sins wherewith great men stand in a special manner chargeable at this day. We could not well know how to account for the conduct of many of the people who are great, considering what opportunities they have to know their duty, and yet how undutifully they act, if the Apostle had not said concerning them, as in 1 Cor. i. 26. "Ye see your calling brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called." And while many thus despise the ordinances of Christ, by a total neglect of them; there are too many, who, though they give an outward attendance on them, sadly evidence their enmity at Christ, by the careless and formal manner, in which they wait upon him therein. A holy God may justly bring the same charge against many gospel-hearers at this day, that he did
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against his ancient people, Mal. i. 13. "Ye said
"also, Behold what a weariness is it! and ye have
"snuffed at it, saith the LORD of hosts; and ye
"brought that which was torn, and the lame and
"the sick; thus ye brought an offering: Should
"I accept this of your hands? saith the LORD."
The great untenderness also, which many discover
in their walk and conversation, declares, in the
most undeniable manner, that they lightly esteem
the ordinances of Christ, whatever their profession
to the contrary may be.

5. The natural enmity of mens hearts at Christ,
runs out sometimes in the way of persecuting his
servants and people, both by tongue and hand.
They that are born after the flesh, persecute those
who are born after the spirit. It has frequently been
the lot of the followers of the Lamb, in all ages,
to suffer persecution: And all who will live godly
in Christ Jesus, may lay their account with being
persecuted in a less or greater degree. Persecu-
tors directed their arrows chiefly against our Lord
himself, in the days of his flesh; and now that he
is out of their reach, they make war with his
seed, who endeavour to keep the commandments
of God, and have the testimony of Jesus. And
thus are still persecuting him through their sides.
Hence, believers are said to *fill up that which is
behind of the sufferings of Christ*, Col. i. 14. And
accordingly we see, when our Lord was graciously
pleased to bring a persecuting Saul, to perceive his sin
and danger in persecuting the Church, he gave him
to know, that his rage had been against him. *Saul,
Saul*, says he, *why persecutest thou me?* Persecu-
tors are among the chief of Christ's enemies; they
not only refuse to give him glory themselves, by
believing in, and professing his name; but they
also stand in the way of others doing it, so far as
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their influence can go. Persecution is a complicated crime, which is readily attended with an opprobrious manner of speaking of Christ, his truths and ways, and with a covetous disposition; all which the Apostle Paul intimates, when reflecting upon his own conduct, when a persecutor, 1 Tim. i. 19. *I was, says he, a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious.* Persecutors not only refuse to enter into the kingdom of God themselves, as our Lord saith of the Scribes and Pharisees, but also do what they can, to stand in the way of those who would enter. So that it may be justly said of them, as the Apostle doth of the persecuting Jews, 1 Thess. ii. 15, 16. "They please not God, and are contrary to all men; forbidding to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins alway," till, when mercy prevents them not, "wrath comes upon them to the uttermost."

6. Men evidence their enmity against Christ, by unbelief. Indeed, unbelief is the great and leading actual sin among the hearers of the gospel; so that we may justly consider it as the root of all the ill will which men have at the Saviour. It is by unbelief that the original corruption of the heart mainly works among those who are favoured with a dispensation of the gospel. Indwelling corruption working by unbelief, is *the sin that most easily begets* the hearers of the gospel, Heb. xii. 1. Unbelief is a *departing from the living God*, and a refusing to embrace the remedy he has graciously provided. Hence our Lord complains of his hearers in the days of his personal ministry, *that they would not come to him, that they might have life*, John v. 40. The unbelieving Jews discovered many signs of enmity against Christ; but his complaint is chiefly upon their unbelief; that being at the root of all their

their other acts of rebellion against him. Great is the enmity men discover against Christ, by their unbelief. Unbelief is a contemning the person of Christ, the record of God concerning him, the bowels of his love, the power of all his miracles, the merit and efficacy of his death, the glory of his ascension, and the majesty of his offices; while it is an accounting the whole history of the gospel, no better than a narration of lies and falsehoods. The unbeliever charges folly upon Christ, denies his love, rejects his authority, undervalues his excellency, counts the blood of the Covenant where-with he was sanctified an unholy thing; denies him the travel of his soul, and pierces and puts him to grief.

7. The natural enmity of mens hearts against Christ, discovers itself in some, by their railing, propagating and defending error.

Deists evidence their enmity against Christ, by denying the necessity of divine Revelation, affirming that the light of nature is sufficient to direct men to happiness. But if there is such a heavy judgment denounced against those who would take away the smallest part of divine Revelation, as we see there is, how awful must their condition be, who, through their pride of corrupt reason and self-wisdom, set aside the whole of it as useless? Rev. xxii. 19. "If any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."

Arians display their enmity against Christ, by denying his supreme Deity, and so putting him *who is over all, God blessed for ever*, among the rank of created beings. He by whom all things were made, and by whom all things consist; he whom

whom angels adore ; and he whom *Jehovah* will have all men to honour, even as they do himself, must be but a creature, according to these proud blasphemers ; because their corrupted reason cannot shew them how he can be *the begotten of the Father*, and not posterior to him in being and existence.

Socinians discover their enmity at this glorious person, not only by joining with the Arians to endeavour to rob him of his Deity, denying that he had any existence before he was born of the Virgin ; but also, by refusing that he suffered as a Surety-Priest, affirming, that he suffered and died only to confirm his doctrine, and set a pattern of patient suffering before his people. There is no truth more clearly set forth in Scripture, than that the sufferings of Christ were of a vicarious nature, Isa. liii. 5, 8. Our Lord Jesus is expressly called *the Surety of the better Testament*, Heb. vii. 22. - And he tells us, *he came into the world* in the assumption of our nature, *to give his life a ransom for*, or, in the stead of the *many*, Matth. xx. 28. And whoever will seriously consider only that one ingredient in his sufferings on the cross, *viz.* his being *deserted*, will, it is presumed, find it difficult to deny that the whole were not penal. He was dealt with by the justice of God, as those whom he suffered for, deserved to have been : *God spared not his own Son*, Rom. viii. 32. And sinners of mankind are called and warranted to plead the benefit of what he hath done and suffered, at the bar of law and justice, for their justification and salvation, as if they had done it all themselves.

All legal preachers are enemies to Christ ; the tendency of their doctrine being to lead men away from him, to found their hopes of eternal life upon some imaginary righteousness of their own, to the neglect

glect and contempt of that righteousness which he has wrought out, and revealed to us in the gospel.

Antinomians evidence their enmity against him, particularly as King in Zion, by affirming, that men are delivered by Christ, not only from the law as a Covenant of Works, but also from all obligation to it as the rule of their practice. And while many evidence their enmity at Christ, by teaching such doctrines as these, it is much to be lamented, that so many evidence their enmity against him, by giving countenance to the teachers of them, though expressly warned from the word of God, to take heed what, and how they hear, and to try the spirits, and cease to hear the instruction that causeth to err from the paths of knowledge, and to prove all things, and so to hold fast that only which is good.

8. Many bewray their enmity at Christ, by apostatizing from him, after professing subjection to him, and kindness for him. These, *like the dog, return to their vomit, and the sow to her wallowing in the mire, after she was made clean.* Apostates are justly reckoned among the chief of the King's enemies, and the most unlikely to become his friends, Heb. vi. 4, 5, 6. And this consideration should excite every professed subject of the King, to exercise a holy cautious fear, *lest a promise being left them of entering into his rest, they should so much as seem to come short of it.* How alarming is that declaration, Heb. x. 38. *If any man draw back my soul shall have no pleasure in him.* The apostate reflects the greatest dishonour upon Christ and the way of truth. He says, on the matter, that he came to Christ, but found nothing in him that was desirable. He despises the pleasant land, grieves the hearts of the godly, and hardens the impenitent in sin. He says, it is vain to serve God, keep his commandments, and to walk mournfully before him. He

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is a snare upon *Mispeh*, and a net spread upon *Taber*, to impede others in their spiritual journey.

9. Many evidence their enmity at Christ, by affecting to be neither his friends nor his foes; they do not choose to oppose religion, and as little can they think to be seen taking part with it; this is a spiritual disease, wherewith many of this generation are sadly affected at this day. They are *Laodicea* like, *neither cold nor hot, but lukewarm*, and so in the greatest danger of being *spued out of Christ's mouth*; for he hath expressly told us, that *those who are not with him, are against him*. Matth. xii. 30. "He that is not with me is against me: And he that gathereth not with me, scattereth abroad." There are many in our day, who give themselves no concern to know the *signs of the times, and what they ought to do*, and so neglect to take part with Christ, in testifying against the sinful courses of a backsliding and profane generation. There are many, some through an unaccountable ignorance of their duty, some through enmity at Christ, carelessness, carnal and selfish views; and others through fear of reproach for his sake, &c. who, we have reason to fear, are provoking the Lord to say concerning them, as of *Meroz*, Judges v. 23. "Curse ye *Meroz*,—Curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty." There are many other ways whereby the natural enmity of the heart exerts itself against Christ, which we cannot insist upon; such as, persons their resting on a form of godliness, without seeking acquaintance with the power of it; living in the neglect of known duty, when the Lord gives them an opportunity to perform it. Taking up with the hope of the hypocrite, and retaining a heart enmity

ty to Christ, under the cloak of pretended friendship. This is indeed a way of exerting the enmity of the heart against Christ, that eludes the eye of man; but he sees it, who will in a little, make all the Churches know, that *he searches the hearts and tries the reins of the children of men.*

II. The *second* thing proposed was, to speak a little of that work of Christ, which consists in his making his enemies become his friends, by means of the gospel.

And it is to be remembered, when we ascribe this work to the gospel as the mean, we intend not the gospel strictly taken, as opposed to the law; but the gospel-dispensation, which includes all the several parts of divine revelation; for Zion's King makes use of his word in general, as the mean of causing the people to fall under him. And,

1. When our Lord Jesus is about to bring a person into a state of friendship with himself, he convinces the man of the sinfulness of his condition, persuading him, both of the reality of his enmity against him, and the danger to which he is exposed on account of it. And his most ordinary method of procedure in doing so, is,

He readily singles out some one sin at first, which it may be, has been of a gross nature, such as breach of Sabbath, some special instance of undutifulness to parents, the persons having been some time or other overtaken with drunkenness, wrathful anger or the like: Thus we find in his dealings with the woman of Samaria, John iv. 18. He singles out the sin of adultery, in which she was then living, laying it closely home to her conscience; he so convinced her of that sin, as that she was convinced in effect, of all sin; for says she to the men of her city, "Come, see a man that told me all things that ever I did: Is not this the Christ? This method

method of fixing the guilt of some one gross violation of the law, upon the conscience at first, is the course our Lord most readily takes with these persons, who have been permitted to continue long in a course of sin, before he has taken a saving dealing with them, by his word and Spirit. He convinces the man of hidden sins, these bosom lusts, and corruptions which were known to none but God, and his own conscience. Such as, the pride, legality, carnality and covetousness of the heart. Christ by his word in the hand of his Spirit, lays open the secrets of the heart, Heb. iv. 12, 13. Giving the man experimentally to know the truth of what he says, Jerem. xvii. 10. "I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings." He moreover convinces the man of those sins which he has long since committed and forgotten, such as the sins of youth; and this he may do by means of an afflicting dispensation of his providence, concurring with his word, as in the case of Joseph's brethren; he often tryts persons with such trials, as that they are made to see their past sins, as it were wrote upon their judgments. He convinces the man of the sin of his nature, and the particular manner by which it works among the hearers of the gospel, namely, by the unbelief of the heart. The sin of unbelief is that sin which doth most easily beset gospel-hearers; it is a sin that works secretly, and is not easily discerned. Neither the natural conscience, nor the law, can discover it to the man, nor do they accuse him on account of it. The law condemns every man for not continuing in all things it commands; but it is the work of the Spirit in an eminent manner, to convince a person of unbelief, John xvi. 9. &c. And until a man is convinced of his unbelief,

belief, he is convinced of no sin at all, in a suitable manner; for while unbelief retains its reigning power in the heart, it keeps the man under the power of all his other sins and corruptions. Hence our Lord singles out this sin, as in that forecited John xvi. 8, 9. as if he would intimate to us, that when a man is once convinced of it, he is, upon the matter, convinced of all sin. *He, viz. the Spirit, will reprove the world of sin—of sin, because they believe not on me.* In one word, he convinces the man of the real nature and tendency of his sin, and lets him see that in it, which he never saw before: He lets him see it, as dishonouring to God, and as the abominable thing which his soul hates. And while the man is made to see it as God's enemy, he is likewise brought to discern what a fearful adversary it is to himself, its native tendency being to defile, disturb and destroy the soul.

2. Our Lord having thus convinced the sinner of his sin, he also shews him the danger to which it exposes him, letting him see, *that they who do the things, with which he stands chargeable, are worthy of death*; and that therefore he in particular, deserves to be punished with *everlasting destruction, from the presence of the Lord, and the glory of his power.* He shews the man the reality of his danger; that he can by no means escape the wrath to come, if he continues in his sinful state and condition. And as the Spirit convinces the man of sin by the precept of the law, he shews him the demerit of it, by means of the threatening, which denounces the curse upon every one that *continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them*, Gal. iii. 10. And the man being convinced, that he has been so far from continuing in *all things* written in the book of the law, that he has continued in *nothing* it required

of him, but trampled all the precepts of it under his feet, while at the same time, he made light of all its threatenings, he now sees himself really to be under its curse; sees every threatening it contains, as an arrow pointing to his heart.

3. As our Lord Jesus convinces the man of his danger, on account of his sin, he also causes him to see the vanity, and fruitlessness of every attempt he is ready to make, in order to recommend himself to the divine favour by his own works of righteousness. It is very natural for a person, when once he sees himself exposed to the wrath of God, for disobedience to his law, to endeavour to turn away his anger, by being more observant of the law than before; accordingly, the grosser acts of wickedness are abandoned, duties are multiplied, and the man hopes, that if patience is exercised toward him, he will make payment of all he owes; but when Christ is really about to make the man his friend, he lets him see, that his own righteousness and works, can by no means profit him, Isa. lvii. 12. He lets him see that he is ruined, both totally and irrecoverably, for any thing he, or any other creature can do for his help. He lets the man see, that the commandment that was ordained to life, now issues in death; and that the law is become so weak through the flesh, that it can afford him no help at all. He now hears the law, and fain would he be delivered out of its hand, but knows not how this can be effected: The law lets him see he is dead, and there it leaves him.

4. The Spirit of God enlightens the mind of the convinced and awakened sinner, in the knowledge of Christ; he destroys the vail of ignorance, wherewith the man's understanding was covered, and shines into his heart, giving him *the light of the knowledge of the glory of God*, as it is displayed

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in the person of our glorious IMMANUEL. Hence the Holy Ghost is called, *the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, in the knowledge of Christ*, Eph. i. 17. He sets the Saviour before the sinner in the word of promise, and opens his eyes to behold him, according to that promise we have John xvi. 14. "He shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine," "and shall shew it unto you."

The holy Spirit shews the man the transcendent glory and excellency of the Redeemer's person; the fulness of saving offices wherewith he is invested by the Father, and their suitableness to his condition; and that in respect of these offices, *he is made of God, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption*, unto poor sinful men. He lets the man see, that righteousness the Saviour has wrought out, as every way sufficient to merit the forgiveness of his sins, and procure his access into the grace and favour of God, notwithstanding all the ill he has done. He lets the man see the New Covenant, which was entered into with Christ as our Surety, from eternity. Shews him that *it is well ordered in all things*; every way fit for securing the great ends God designed by it, *viz.* His own glory, and the eternal salvation of sinners of mankind. He shews the man, the ability and willingness of Christ, to save sinners, according to the tenor of that Covenant, and him in particular; thus convincing him, "that it is a faithful saying, "and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ-Jesus "came into the world to save sinners, of whom "the very chief are not excepted."

5. Christ having made himself known to the sinner, the Spirit apprehends the man for Christ, works faith in his heart, with all the other saving graces which are inseparably connected with it; and having implanted faith in the soul, by means
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of the promise, he draws it forth into exercise, so as that the soul is brought actually to embrace the Saviour, and close with him, as his Saviour and Redeemer, in particular; and that on the footing of the deed of gift and grant which God has made of Christ, in the gospel, to sinners without exception, with the invitation to receive him, and the faithful promise of salvation, in the way of believing in him. And this faith, whereby the sinner is brought forward, to lay hold on the Saviour, is God's gift to him, as really as the Saviour himself, Eph. ii. 8. "By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God." For the man's receiving Christ, as the propitiation for his sin, is solely the fruit of such promises as these you have, Isa. xlv. 5, "One shall say, I am the Lord's; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob, &c. Surely shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength," Isa. xlv. 25. "I will say, it is my people: and they shall say, the Lord is my God." So much for a short view of that work of Christ, which consists in his making his enemies become his friends, by means of the word, in the hand of his Spirit. But it may be observed here, by way of caution, that when we speak of the Spirit, his setting the Saviour before the sinner; and his bringing the sinner to see, and believe in him, as distinct actings of the Spirit, we speak according to the manner in which we must conceive of this matter; for that moment Christ is savingly presented to the sinner, that moment the sinner is brought to see and believe upon him.

III. We now pass on to the *third* thing in the method, which was, to offer some thoughts upon the effect of that work, which consists in Christ's making his enemies become his friends; or, speak of the people

people their falling under him, in the way of kindly subjecting themselves to his sceptre and government. And, in general, the effect is, that the people fall under him. *Thine arrows are sharp in the hearts of the King's enemies ; whereby the people fall under thee.* We have already observed, that there are various ways of falling under Christ ; his word and ordinances become the *savour of death* to some, and so they are slain by the words of his mouth. And in a time wherein the Lord makes remarkable appearances in behalf of his Church and people, answering their prayers by *fearful things in righteousness*, by marvellous deliverances to them, and fearful plagues upon his and their enemies, there are many who feign subjection to him ; and, though this kind of subjection leaves them no more the heart-friends of Christ than they were before, yet it makes for the outward peace and comfort of the Church ; hence the Lord says concerning Israel of old, " O that my people had hearkened unto me, and Israel had walked in my ways ! I should have subdued their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries." The haters of the Lord should have submitted themselves unto him ; or, as it is in the margin of some of your Bibles, " They should have yielded a feigned obedience unto him." When the snare that was laid for the Jews, by Haman, in Esther's days, was broken, many became Jews for fear of the Jews. There is moreover a falling under Christ, in the way of the person's yielding a kindly subjection unto him, which is the fruit of the overpowering influence of his love and grace upon the heart, in the day of his armies. Of this sort of subjection we now speak ; and the following things are included in it.

1. A real sense of the person's error and mistake in taking up the weapons of rebellion against God.

God. A falling under Christ, in the way of kindly subjection, is a saying with the Church, as in Psal. cvi. 6. "We have sinned with our fathers; we have committed iniquity; we have done wickedly." When the poor prodigal is brought to himself, being cured of his spiritual madness, he sees the sin and folly of his former course, and is disposed to cry, *Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight*; he sees his very nature filled with enmity against God, and that his whole life has been one continued act of rebellion against his Maker, Preserver, and bountiful Benefactor; and he is convinced, in a special manner, of the exceeding sinfulness of his conduct in shutting his ear against the charming voice of the gospel, and refusing to give glory to God, by believing on the name of his only begotten Son.

2. Falling in subjection under Christ, includes in it faith's views of forgiveness, notwithstanding all the provocations the man sees himself chargeable with. There have been battles fought among men where no quarter was to be expected, and so no encouragement left for the conquered to cast themselves at the feet of the conqueror, in hopes of mercy. But it is far otherways in this war. The King of Israel is a merciful King; yea, *he delights in mercy; in him compassions flow*; and the poor sinner being brought to view the forgiveness that is with God, even forgiveness for him in particular, does, in the faith thereof, grounded on the faithful promise of JEHOVAH, and confirmed by the blood of his Son, drop the weapons of his rebellion; and, according to his faith, finds in his sweet experience, that God is good and gracious, and ready to forgive. He can now join with the Church, saying, "He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities," Psal. ciii. 10. He

He sees, that though shame and confusion belonged to him, yet mercies and forgivenesses belong to a gracious God, though he has rebelled against him.

3. A sinner's falling under Christ, by kindly subjecting the heart and soul to him, has in it a holy blushing, and confusion of face, on account of sin the man has done. When the captive to grace sets the pardoning mercy, grace and kindness of a God in Christ, over against his innumerable provocations, both of heart and life; that promise is accomplished in his case, which you have Ezek. xvi. 62, 63. "I will establish my covenant with thee, and thou shalt know that I am the Lord; that thou mayest remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God." When a sinner gets once a faith's view of the love of God in Christ to his soul, it shames him out of his enmity against such a loving and kind God; and fills his heart with gratitude to him, and his mouth with praise, causing him to say with the Church, Micah vii. 18. "Who is a God like unto thee, that doneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy."

4. This falling under Christ, includes in it a cordial renouncing, and giving up with every other lord and lover. You see what the language of the heart is, in the day the sinner is determined to submit to the righteousness of God, Isa. xxvi. 13. "O Lord our God, other lords besides thee have had dominion over us; but by thee only will we make mention of thy name." And to the same purpose is that we have, Hosea xiv. 8. "Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols?"

“idols?” What have I to do any more with self, that I should set it up as a rival to Christ? What have I to do any more with the sinful fashions and pleasures of a vain and gaudy world? What have I to do any more with sin, either to love or practise it? What have I to do any more with a law-righteousness, rejecting *the righteousness which is by the faith of the Son of God?* What have I to do any more with Satan, that I should hearken to his motions and suggestions, to the dishonour of God, and the disturbing of the peace and quiet of my own soul? These, and many other things of the like nature, saith the captive to grace, are what I now see I have been deeply chargeable with, and I have cause to be ashamed that this has been so long the case with me.

5. It includes a hearty embracing of, and closing with Christ, as our Saviour, Head and Husband. The man who is brought, by the power of divine grace, to fall under Christ, takes him for his Saviour, *the Lord his righteousness*, and his all for time and eternity. He sees there is salvation in him, and no where else, Acts iv. 12. He now adopts the language of the Church, Jer. iii. 23. “Truly in vain is salvation hoped for, from the hills, and from the multitude of mountains: Truly in the Lord our God, is the salvation of Israel.” And as the man is brought really to accept of Christ, as his Saviour from sin and wrath, he likewise takes him for his Lord and Master; taking on his yoke, and putting his shoulder under his burden; esteeming the former easy, and the latter light, Matth. xi. 28, 29. He embraces a whole Christ in his person, offices and fullness, as *made of God to him, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption*. And there is nothing he so much desires, as to experience the execution of
of

of all his saving offices upon his soul, making him more and more *meet to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light.*

6. and *lastly*, A sinner's falling in subjection under Christ, has in it, a solemn giving up of the whole man unto him, to be saved by him, and also to serve him. As the Lord Jesus gives himself wholly to the man, so the man gives himself and his all to Christ, saying to him, *Thine am I, and on thy side*, as did Amasai to David. The man presents his body *a living sacrifice to God*, as the Macedonians are said to have given their *ownelves to the Lord*, 2 Cor. viii. 5. It is true, the time when they are there said to have given themselves to the Lord, does not refer to their first conversion; but then, that act of theirs, was no more on the matter, than a solemn renewal, in a social capacity, of what each of them had been led to do, as individuals, in the day of their first falling under Christ: And as the man gives up himself to Christ to be saved by him, so likewise to serve him in his body and Spirit which are his. He is disposed, through grace, to be at his call, whether to duty or difficulty; earnestly desiring to know *what the will of the Lord is*, being heartily resolved to comply with it when discerned, Acts ix. 6. And the longer he has been in Satan's camp, now that he is brought under the banner of the Captain of salvation, the more diligently does he employ himself in his service, being careful to redeem the time he has lost in the service of sin. The Apostle Paul had many busy days in persecuting Christ, in his cause and members; but once that he fell a captive to the grace of God, he was indefatigable in preaching the faith which he formerly destroyed.

IV. The *last* head proposed in the method, was the application.

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1. This

1. This doctrine may be improved in an use of information. And,

(1.) We may see from this subject, the woful condition which all men are in by nature; they are enemies to God in their minds, and daily discovering they are so in their life and conversation, Coloss. i. 21. And, saith the same Apostle elsewhere, "The carnal mind is enmity against God." God and man were once in perfect amity and friendship, but sin has broken up the peace, *and separated between us and our God*, Isa. lix. 2. And not only are we enemies to God, but having commenced his enemies, we have become self-destroyers; for *all who hate him, love death*.

(2.) We may see that men are not only enemies to God, but obstinately so; they are disposed to continue in that unhappy condition until divine power is exerted in their behalf; though the sinfulness and danger of their condition is laid before them in word and ordinances, they go on in their rebellion against God, disregarding his gracious calls, and despising his threatening voice; their neck is as an iron sinew, and their brow brass; no means nor instruments can reach conviction to the heart; it is only the arrow directed by IMMANUEL'S own hand, that can pierce the adamant heart. "Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the King's enemies; whereby the people fall under thee."

(3.) We may see from what has been said, the kindness and love of God toward sinners of mankind, in devising means to have them brought back into a state of favour and friendship with himself. He, from all eternity, thought upon us in our low estate, and in pursuance of his design of love, has sent his own Son, to make up the peace betwixt him and us; sent him to purchase the peace *by the blood*

blood of his cross, Coloss. i. 20. to proclaim it in the gospel, Eph. ii. 17. and apply it to the consciences of men by his Spirit.

(4.) We may see the power and efficacy of the word of Christ, when accompanied by the Spirit. It is the great mean whereby the Lord Jesus makes his conquests. The preaching of the gospel, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, is that whereby Satan is made to fall as lightning from heaven. The special mean whereby rebels are brought to drop the weapons of their rebellion against God, and submit to the free holding of grace, 2 Cor. x. 4, 5. The blowing of the gospel-trumpet over the propitiatory sacrifice, is the special mean the Lord Jesus is pleased to make use of, in bringing his enemies to become his friends, Isa. xxvii. 13. "It shall come to pass, in that day, saith the Lord, "that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they "shall come who were ready to perish in the land "of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, "and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at "Jerusalem." He sends, "the rod of his strength "out of Zion, and the people are made willing in "the day of his power."

(5.) We may see, that there is no standing it out against the Captain of salvation; his arrows are sharp and piercing. All must either bow to him, and yield him the subjection of faith, or be broken by the iron rod of his irresistible power. He must reign until his foes become his footstool, Psal. cx. 1. His word returns not to him empty, but accomplishes the end for which he sends it, Isa. lv. 10, 11. If it has not a healing effect, it will have a killing tendency among all to whom it is sent, as the Apostle Paul declares, 2 Cor. ii. 15, 16. "We are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, "in them that are saved, and in them that perish. "To

"To the one we are the favour of death unto death; and to the other, the favour of life unto life."

(6.) and *lastly*, We may from this subject infer the safety and preservation of the Church, and every particular believer. Zion's King is a man of war; he fights for mount Zion, and the hill thereof. He has many arrows in his quiver, all ready to flee against the face of his, and his people's enemies. He is never at a loss to strike a blow with success upon his adversaries; for strong is his hand, and high is his right hand. The armies in heaven and earth, are all at his command; and though hell and earth combine against the Church, the men of might cannot find their hands, they only kick against the pricks, to their own wounding, but their weapons cannot prosper, Isa. liv. 17. "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment, thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." Those, whose righteousness is of the Lord, need not doubt of their safety from him also; for *whom he justifies*, those he will not fail to glorify.

2. The *second* use of the doctrine, might be of examination; but for this, we may refer you to what was advanced upon the *second* and *third* heads; only in a few words here.

Have you really seen the contrariety of your nature and practice, to the image, will, and holy law of God? Have you been brought to see the way that original corruption chiefly works among the hearers of the gospel, namely, by the unbelief of the heart? Has the holy Spirit convinced you of sin, *because ye believed not on the only begotten Son of God*? Have you really received Christ Jesus the Lord,

Lord, in all his offices? Do you depend upon him for wisdom, righteousness, grace and glory? Have you been determined to say with the heart, *In the Lord have I righteousness and strength*, Isa. xlv. 24. Do you desire to have fellowship with Christ, in his sufferings, for the mortification of your corruptions? And do you desire to know him in the power of his resurrection, in order that you may live in newness of life? Are you at war with all known sin, in yourselves and others? Do you believe with the Psalmist, and endeavour to practise accordingly? Psal. lxvi. 18. *If I regard iniquity in mine heart, the Lord will not hear me.* Is it your desire to comply with all known duty, so far as in providence you have an opportunity? And, are regard to the authority of Christ, love to him, springing from faith unfeigned, with an eye to the glory of God, the motives with you in essaying the performance of every duty? If matters stand thus with you, happy are ye and the people who are in such a case. You have reason to consider yourselves as among the true subjects of the King, having nothing to fear from the arrows of his wrath, but all good to expect from the riches of his love, and the merit of his blood.

3. The *last* use of the doctrine shall be in a word of exhortation. And,

(1.) We exhort such of you as are brought over to Christ, by the all-conquering power of his Spirit and grace, to bless the Lord, that ever he was pleased to make a saving revelation of his powerful arm to you, determining you to give up with the service of sin and Satan, and take on the yoke of Christ; bless him, for not only bringing his righteousness near to you, but also for working faith in your hearts, drawing it forth into exercise, and so causing you to *receive and put on the Lord Jesus Christ*.

Christ. Study to act the part of faithful subjects to him who has purchased you by his blood, and subdued you to himself by the power of his Spirit and grace. Be not ashamed of him, nor of the way of truth and holiness, in the midst of a perverse generation. Use your influence to bring others to fall under him; pray for success to his arms, *that his word may have free course, and be glorified.* Commend his person, love, grace, and service, to your relations, and all about you, as occasion may serve; that they also may yield themselves to the Lord, and enter into his sanctuary, which he hath sanctified for ever.

(2.) We exhort you, who have had, it may be, some experience of what is affirmed concerning the arrows of Christ in the text, having felt them to be sharp in your hearts, but have not as yet been brought to fall under him, in a kindly manner, taking him as the Captain of your salvation; we intreat you to beware of stifling your convictions, and quenching the motions of the holy Spirit. Many, when the Lord shoots an arrow of conviction into their hearts, find means to pull it out before it has the desired effect. Some plunge themselves into the throng and confusion of worldly business, as did Cain, and those our Lord mentions in the parable, Luke viii. 14. "That which
 "fell among thorns (says he) are they, who, when
 "they have heard, go forth, and are choaked with
 "cares, and riches, and pleasures of this life, and
 "bring no fruit to perfection." Others there are, who promise their convictions a hearing afterwards, as Felix did, saying to the Apostle Paul, "Go thy way, and when I have a more
 "convenient season, I will call for thee." Some, like Saul, run to carnal mirth and pleasures, to take off the edge of their sharp convictions;
 while

while others, it may be, go to duties, seeking ease to their consciences, merely from the performance of them, thinking thereby to atone for past offences, while they quite overlook the only remedy for a wounded spirit, *viz.* the *precious blood of Christ*, which alone can cleanse, and in cleansing, heal the conscience. Let all who may be under convictions, then, betake themselves by faith, to him who wounds, that he may heal. Jesus Christ is the only Physician, and his blood the sovereign balm for a sin-sick soul: Beware of speaking peace to your souls, before it be spoken by him. When persons are under awakenings of conscience, they have reason to suspect the cure, that is not effected by means of the word of promise, Psal. cvii. 20. "He sent his word, and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions." When persons have been under convictions, and have got ease, but not by means of the promise, there is too much reason to apprehend, Satan has been the physician; and when he is so, the cure is always worse than the disease.

(3.) We exhort all who may be labouring under convictions, to be on their guard against giving way to despondency or despair, though for the present you may not see any thing but *blackness, darkness, and tempest*, attended with *the trumpet sounding loudly from mount Sinai*; yet you know not how soon *the day may break, and the shadows flee away*. The tender-hearted Physician may, before you are aware, *bring you to the light*, and make you to *behold his righteousness*, so as to be in case to say with the Psalmist, Psal. xl. 2. "He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings."

(4.) It may perhaps be the case with some, that they

they cannot say but they have had some convictions; yet they have not had experience of so many strong and lasting convictions, as they have heard and read of in the case of others, and so labour under doubts and fears, whether or not they are yet brought over to Christ. If this is the case with any of you, we exhort you to consider, that in this, as well as in every other instance of the divine procedure, God acts sovereignly; he does not exercise all with the same measure and degree of a law-work. Some are sanctified from the womb, as Jeremiah, Jacob, John the Baptist, &c. Others have been favoured with a strict religious education, and, like Timothy, have been *acquainted with the holy scriptures from their childhood*, 2 Tim. ii. 15.; and thus having been kept from the gross pollutions of the world, and early acquainted with the grace of God in truth; they cannot have such experience of a law-work, as those who have lived long in a state of estrangement from God, before their conversion, and have been chargeable with many gross, open, and direct violations of his holy law. Those the Lord ordinarily keeps under the spirit of bondage for a longer time; and their convictions are readily stronger, and more lasting; and their deliverance from them more clear and manifest to themselves; and though they may often be diffculted about their case and exercise afterwards, yet they are not so ready to call in question the state of their souls. If persons therefore have been convinced of their lost state by nature, their absolute need of Christ; and have been determined to accept of him, in all his offices, as offered to them in the gospel; and are desirous to be saved by him from sin as well as the wrath to come; and love holiness both in heart and life; they should not draw harsh conclusions against themselves,

felves, though they cannot distinctly condescend upon the time, place, manner, and other circumstances of the Lord's beginning first to deal savingly with their souls. If Christ be precious to you, if your souls cleave to the covenant of promise, in faith and love; and if sin be the object of your real hatred, you have reason to conclude, *you are passed from death to life, and shall never come into condemnation.*

(5.) We exhort you who are yet in the camp of Satan, and so acting the part of enemies to Zion's King, to consider the sinfulness of your conduct. You are engaged in a most unrighteous, dangerous, and soul-ruining war. *All who hate Christ, love death.* The Captain of our salvation is more than match for all his enemies: And though he may bear long with them, *his hand will find them out* at last, Psal. xxi. 8, 9. "Thine hand shall find out all thine enemies; thy right hand shall find out those that hate thee. Thou shalt make them as a fiery oven in the time of thine anger: the LORD shall swallow them up in his wrath, and the fire shall devour them." If death find you in a state of enmity against Christ, you must *fall into the hands of the living God*, Heb. x. 31. which is a most awful consideration; for a person to *fall into the hands of the living God*, is to be sifted before the tribunal of God the Judge of all, having no plea to present to him, either from the law or the gospel, why judgment should not be pronounced against him. The man has *broken the law*, and he would not take the benefit of the *remedy* provided in the *gospel*; and therefore cannot stand in judgment.

We exhort you further, to consider, that the controversy subsisting between God and you, may yet be ended; the Captain of salvation, is present-

ly willing to take you under the banner of his love. He is saying, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord; and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, and he will abundantly pardon," Isa. lv. 6, 7. He *will multiply to pardon*, as it reads upon the margin. Consider, that you must either take hold of the sceptre of grace, that is now stretched out to you in the gospel; or be broken by the tremendous rod of divine power, and vindictive justice. See what the Father says to Christ, concerning all his final enemies, Psal. ii. 9. "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron, thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." If you do not embrace Christ, while the day of his merciful visitation is lasting with you, you will bewail your folly through an endless eternity. Mercy is revealed from heaven to all who will receive him by faith, while wrath is denounced against all his final enemies, Psal. lxxviii. 21. "God shall wound the head of his enemies: and the hairy scalp of such a one as goeth on still in his trespasses." And as this wrath is revealed from heaven, in the threatening, so every awakening of conscience any of you who are his enemies, may experience in time, may verily be considered by you, if mercy do not interpose, as so many drops before the dreadful shower of his fury, which will fall upon you for ever. *For upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire, and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: This shall be the portion of their cup.* Be intreated, therefore, to cry to a God of grace, that while he is giving you his kind invitations, *to fly from the wrath to come*, he may determine you by the power of his Spirit and grace to embrace his Son by faith. *Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish*

perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.

S E R M O N VIII.

The Kingdom of CHRIST, an everlasting Kingdom, and ruled with perfect Justice and Equity.

PSAL. xlv. 6.

Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever : The sceptre of thy Kingdom is a right sceptre.

OUR Lord Jesus Christ is incomparably glorious and excellent, and every thing belonging to him excels in beauty. *His arrows are sharp, his kingdom everlasting, and his sceptre never was, nor can be stained with injustice ; he reigns in righteousness, and rules in judgment.* “ Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever : The sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre.” That JEHOVAH, in the person of the Father, is the speaker in this verse, and JEHOVAH, in the person of the Son, the person spoken to, is manifest from Heb. i. 8. where the inspired Apostle adduces this text, as a most concluding proof, that “ he, who has by himself, purged our sins, and is now sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, is God, the brightness of the Father’s glory, and the express image of his person.” And that as Mediator, “ he is high, and far exalted above
“ the

“the principalities and powers, that are in heavenly places.” More particularly,

1. Observe the designation here given to our Lord Jesus; the Father calls him *God*. He is treated of in this Psalm as Mediator, the Saviour, Head and Husband of the Church; but we do well to remember, that though he stooped so low for our sakes, as to make himself *of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant*, he is no mean person: “He thinks it no robbery to be equal with *God*,” Phil. ii. 6. He is the essential *heir of all things*, though in love to the souls of men he was graciously pleased to become poor, poor to the degree that *he had not where to lay his head*, to the end they might be eternally enriched. This text contains such a clear proof of our Lord’s divinity, supreme God-head, and Deity, that, was there no other text in all the Bible, from whence this precious truth could be evinced, it is alone sufficient to shut the mouths of Arians, and would do it, were they not under the blinding influence of the god of this world. Does God the Father thus address our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever*? Does he expressly call him *God*? And shall worms of his footstool have the audacity to give him the lie? But these men may be ready to tell us, this designation is sometimes given to creatures in Scripture, as in Exod. iv. 16. chap. vii. 1. and Psal. lxxxvi. 6. But let it be remembred, that the Apostle proves from this text, that Christ is God, and that though we find the name *Elohim* sometimes given to creatures, as in the above texts, yet, wherever we find it so applied, it is always clogged with some such diminishing expression, as intimates they were only made God’s for a certain time and purpose; but the designation is given to our Lord Jesus in the proper sense

of the word, without any such clog, limitation, or restriction; and is a name never given to any in Scripture, simply and absolutely, but to *him who is over all God, and blessed for ever.*

2. We have two badges of royalty ascribed to Christ, a *throne* and a *sceptre*. “Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: The sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre.”

By the throne, we may understand the power and authority which our Lord Jesus, as King and Head of his Church, exercises for the comfort and welfare of all his true subjects, and the restraining and conquering of all his and their enemies: This power is emblematically pointed forth by the throne. Zion's King has a *kingdom that ruleth over all*, considered as God equal with the Father, and a delegated power, which, as Mediator, he exercises not only within the Church, his special kingdom, but also over devils and wicked men, for the good and comfort of his true subjects, John xvii. 2. And by the *sceptre*, we may understand the actual exercise of that power, which is lodged in him, as *given to be head over all things to the Church*, the sceptre being an emblem of rule and government.

3. We may observe, what is affirmed of Christ's throne and sceptre. Of the *first*, it is affirmed, that *it is for ever and ever*. “Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever.” The kingdom of Christ *is for ever, and his dominion shall not be cut off*: This is the same with the account the angel gives us of the kingdom and power of the Messiah, when he came to intimate, that the time of his incarnation was at hand, Luke i. 32, 33. “He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David; and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom
“there

“there shall be no end.” *Secondly* of the *sceptre*, it is affirmed, that it is *right*; it is a sceptre of righteousness or straightness. *Zion’s King is just in all his ways, and holy in all his works*: He is subject to no mistakes in the management of his kingdom. And what we are here told concerning the sceptre of *IMMANUEL’s* kingdom, may be viewed as one special reason of the perpetuity of it. Earthly kings do often shorten their reigns, and bring destruction upon their kingdoms, by mal-administration; but *Zion’s King is possessed of all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*, with a perfect love to righteousness, and hatred of all iniquity. The doctrine of the text is,

Doct. *The kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ (who is God) is an everlasting kingdom, and ruled in the most just and equitable manner.* “Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: The sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre.”

The method in which we propose to speak to this subject, as the Lord may be pleased to assist, is,

I. To endeavour to shew that *Zion’s King is God*.

II. Speak a little concerning the permanent and lasting nature of his kingdom and throne.

III. Shew that his kingdom is governed in a most just and equitable manner.

IV. Apply.

I. The *first* thing proposed in the method, was to endeavour to shew that *Zion’s King is God*. And,

1. This truth will appear, when we consider that he is expressly called *God* in Scripture, *Isa. ix. 6.* “Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder;”

“and

“and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty GOD.” JEHOVAH the Father expressly calls him GOD in the text; and the Apostle saith, *he is over all, God blessed for ever*, Rom. ix. 5. And another Apostle declares, that he is numerically one, in nature and essence with the Father and holy Spirit, 1 John v. 7. “There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, (that is, the Son) and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one.” There are two epithets given to our glorious IMMANUEL, by the Apostle to the Hebrews, chap. i. 3. by which his God-head is asserted in the clearest and most convincing manner, *The brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person*. He is *the brightness of glory*, saith the Apostle; this expression denotes the equality of the Son with the Father, “So much glory, so much splendor and brightness; the one must be proportional to the other; and though we can distinguish between glory and its brightness, they cannot be separated the one from the other, more than light and heat can be from the sun. He is moreover called, *the express image of the Father's person, or, the express character of substance, being or existence*,” as the word may be read. The word we render *image* or *character*, signifies the impression that is made upon wax by the seal or stamp, which in every point answers to the original from whence it is taken; there is neither more nor less in the one than there is in the other. The expression, however, being metaphorical, must not be strained, or else it loses its beauty and usefulness, as to the end for which it is brought.

2. That Jesus Christ is God, will appear when it is considered that such attributes are ascribed to him in Scripture, as are competent to God only. *Eternity*

nity is ascribed to him ; *his goings forth* are declared to have been of old, from everlasting, Micah v. 2. *Immutability* is ascribed unto him. It is to our glorious Redeemer, the Apostle saith, " Thou Lord, " in the beginning, hast laid the foundation of the " earth ; and the heavens are the works of thine " hands. They shall perish, but thou remainest ; " and they all shall wax old, as doth a garment ; " and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up ; and " they shall be changed ; but thou art the same, and " thy years shall not fail." Our Lord Jesus is *omniscient*, knowing all things, John xxi. 15. " He " needs not that any testify unto him of man, for " he knows what is in him," John ii. 24, 25. He is *almighty* and *independent*. " I am Alpha and " Omega," says he, " the beginning and the end- " ing,—which was, and which is to come, the AL- " MIGHTY," Rev. i. 8. He is *every where present* : Hence he tells Nicodemus, that he was in heaven while he was speaking to him on earth, John iii. 13. " No man," says he, " hath ascended up to heaven " but he that came down from heaven, even the " Son of man which is in heaven."

3. That Jesus Christ is God, will appear, when it is considered that divine worship, which is due to God only, is to be performed unto him, Heb. i. 6. " When he bringeth in the first begotten into the " world, he saith, And let all the angels of God " worship him." Men are commanded by the Father to worship him, Psal. ii. 12. And to believe in him, which is the highest act of worship and adoration, 1 John iii. 23. And, saith JEHOVAH to the Church, concerning him, Psal. xlv. 11. *He is thy LORD, and worship thou him.* All divine ordinances, word, sacraments, and censures, are to be dispensed in his name, 2 Cor. v. 20. Matth. xxviii. 18. and 1 Cor. v. 4, 5. Yea, it is the will of our heavenly

heavenly Father, that all men honour the Son, as they do himself, John v. 22, 23. "The Father hath committed all judgment unto the Son: that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father who hath sent him."

4. and lastly, Jesus Christ is God, for works are done by him which none but an infinitely powerful agent can perform. "By him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him." Col. i. 16. And as all things were created by him, they also do consist and are upheld in being by his omnipotent arm. He is *the resurrection and the life*, John xi. 25. He *raiseth the dead, and quickeneth whomsoever he will*. Yea, *all things whatsoever the Father doth, the same doth the Son*.

We might add here, that the eternal power and God-head of our Lord Jesus, shines forth in a most conspicuous manner, in every part of the work of our redemption. This is a glass wherein we may behold the steps of the majesty of our God, and our mighty King. He has not only *fulfilled the law of God*, but *magnified and made it honourable*, Isa. xlii. 21. This is what no creature-obedience could ever have done. He has satisfied the justice of God, in the whole of its demands. God has smelt a savour of rest, in the sacrifice he offered, Eph. v. 2. *He has finished transgression*, Dan. ix. 24. Sin is condemned in his flesh, Rom. viii. 3. He has taken away the sting of death, and *destroyed him that had the power of it*, Heb. ii. 14. He has judged the prince of this world, and cast him out. *He has broken Rahab, or the proud enemy in pieces*,

Psal. lxxxix. 10. In one word, by virtue of his own power, he not only *laid down his life*, but *took it up again*, John x. 18. And he is, as Mediator, managing a trust at the Father's right hand, which none but an infinite Person can execute, Rev. i. 18. "I am he (says he) that liveth, and was dead; and "behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and "have the keys of hell and of death." So much for the first thing proposed, which was to shew, that he who is our Saviour, is truly and properly God. We now proceed to the *second* head in the method, which was,

II. To speak a little concerning the lasting and permanent nature of the kingdom of Christ. And here,

First, We shall make a few general observations about his kingdom. *Secondly*, Shew that it is *for ever and ever*.

It was *first* proposed, on this head, to make a few general observations, about the kingdom of Christ. And,

1. We observe, that our Lord Jesus has an essential kingdom, which is that absolute supreme power and authority, which he exercises over all creatures in heaven, earth, and hell. This is a dominion essential and natural to him as *God equal with the Father and holy Spirit*. Of this kingdom speaks the Psalmist, where he saith, *His kingdom ruleth over all*, Psal. ciii. 19. And elsewhere he saith, *Thine is the kingdom, O LORD, and thou art exalted as head above all*. This throne and kingdom of essential glory, though it may be included here, is not the kingdom immediately intended in the text; but it cannot fail to contribute in the highest degree, to the comfort of the true children of Zion, to consider, that he who is their King, is the Governor among the nations; ever doing what seemeth

seemeth him good, in heaven above, the earth beneath, the sea, and all deep places.

2. We observe, that our Lord Jesus has a kingdom and throne of grace, Heb. iv. 16. This is what is commonly called his mediatorial kingdom, consisting in that sovereign power and authority, in and over the Church, which, as Mediator, he derives from God the Father. Of this power and authority, speaks our Lord to his disciples, Matth. xxviii. 18. And, saith the Apostle, Eph. i. 22. *He, meaning the Father, hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the Church.* This mediatory power and authority of our Lord Jesus, may be viewed both as extending to all the creatures, as is clear from the texts just now cited, and also as more immediately terminating in the Church his special kingdom, in and over which he reigns by the appointment of the Father, of which appointment we read, Psal. ii. 6. where JEHOVAH saith, *I have set my King upon my holy hill of Zion.* I have given him both right and power, to rule there, in the midst of his enemies.

3. We may observe, that the kingdom of grace, or the Church of Christ, may be considered either as set up and administered in the world, or as set up in the hearts of men. In whatever place of the world the gospel is faithfully preached, the sacraments dispensed, the censures of the Church applied, according to divine appointment, and that order observed, which Christ hath instituted in his word; there the throne and kingdom of our Lord Jesus, may be said to be set up, and his banner displayed. The subjects of Christ's kingdom considered in this light, are all those in every place of the world, who make an open and credible profession of their faith in him, subjecting themselves to him

him in all his offices, ordinances, and institutions, with their children. When Christ sets up, and administers his kingdom among a people, they are highly favoured, being thereby exalted to heaven, in respect of external privilege, as our Lord intimates, Matth. xi. 23. And his taking his kingdom from a person, or people, is a most awful judgment, as he declares to the Jews, Matth. xxi. 43. And, reproving the Church of Ephesus, for falling from her first love, he saith, *I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove the candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.*

The setting up of the kingdom of Christ in the heart, is the same thing with what the Apostle calls, *God revealing his Son in him*, Gal. i. 16. Or it is his saving men by the *washing of regeneration*; his *translating them from the power of darkness, into the kingdom of his dear Son*, &c. When the holy Spirit so accompanies the external dispensation of the gospel, as that men are determined to unite with Christ by faith, then the kingdom of grace is set up in their hearts; Satan is cast down from the throne, *light* takes the place of *darkness*; *love* that of *enmity*; and *righteousness* of *unrighteousness*, &c. It is of the kingdom of Christ, as set up in the heart, the Apostle speaks, when he saith, “The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but *“ righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost,”* Rom. xiv. 17. All true believers are put under the dominion of grace, Rom. vi. 14. Planted in the house of God by the saving agency of the Holy Spirit, Psal. xcii. 13. where they are made to *flourish like the palm-tree, and grow as the cedar in Lebanon*. It is a high privilege to be a subject of Christ’s kingdom, as set up in the world; but to have his throne and kingdom set up in the heart, is to possess a seat in the suburbs of glory; for grace and
glory

glory are inseparably connected together, Psal. lxxxiv. 11. "The Lord will give grace and glory: "No good thing will he withhold from them "that walk uprightly."

4. and lastly, It may be observed on this head, that our Lord Jesus has a throne and kingdom of glory. It is of the kingdom of glory the Apostle Paul speaks, when he saith, (2 Tim. iv. 18.) "The "Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and "preserve me to his heavenly kingdom." This kingdom is that *house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens*, 2 Cor. v. 1.; and which we find called, *the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*, 2 Pet. i. 11. This kingdom is Christ's natural property, considered as God equal with the Father, and having as Mediator made a purchase of it for the many sons he is bringing to glory, Eph. i. 13. He has taken possession of it in their name, and as their Forerunner: Hence they are said to *sit with him in heavenly places*, Eph. ii. 6. As their representing Head, which effectually secures their sitting with him there, in their own persons, in due time, according to his promise, John xiv. 2, 3. "—I go to prepare a place for you. And "if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come "again and receive you unto myself; that where I "am, there ye may be also." Every true believer enters upon the begun possession of the kingdom of glory, in respect of the soul, so soon as he drops the clay-tabernacle, as is clear from the words of our Lord to the thief on the cross, to whom he saith, *To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise*, Luke xxiii. 43. And the Apostle Paul speaks of his *being present with the Lord*, as the immediate result of his *departure from the body*, Phil. i. 23. The spirits of just men are made perfect, perfectly freed from sin, by a copious and plentiful application of the

the virtue and efficacy of the Redeemer's blood unto them by his Spirit, before they launch forth into eternity. Now, as the souls of believers *enter into the joy of their Lord* immediately upon their release from the body, so the believer shall enter to the possession of the kingdom in his whole man, in the day of the general resurrection, when he shall receive the adoption, *viz. the redemption of the body*, Rom. viii. 23. The Lord Jesus shall then "change the vile body, and fashion it like unto his own glorious body," Phil. iii. 21. And being fitted and prepared in its resurrection to be a proper habitation for the glorified spirit, every soul shall resume the possession of its own body; and *then shall the righteous shine as the sun, in the kingdom of their Father*. The day of the general resurrection will prove the day of the believer's complete redemption, as our Lord intimates to the Disciples, when informing them of the signs which are to usher in the last days, Luke xxi. 28. "When these things begin to come to pass, (says he) then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh."

The *second* thing proposed on this head, was, to shew that the kingdom or Church of Christ, is to endure *for ever and ever*. And here,

First, We may observe some things more generally, concerning the perpetuity of the Church. And,

Secondly, Shew, in some particulars, that she is *for ever and ever*.

It was proposed, *first*, to observe some things more generally, concerning the perpetuity of the Church. And,

1. We may observe, that the kingdom of our Lord Jesus was *from everlasting* in design; the King himself is *from everlasting*, an eternal and immutable

mutable King ; yea, he was chosen King of Zion from everlasting, Psal. lxxxix. 19. Hence says he, Prov. viii. 23. "I was set up from everlasting, " from the beginning, or ever the earth was." And as the King was set up from everlasting, his kingdom was actually erected so soon as the nature of the thing would admit ; no sooner had Satan found means to set up his kingdom of darkness in the world, than the kingdom of Christ was erected upon the ruins of it, according to the judicial intimation that was made to him in the first promise, Gen. iii. 15. *The seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent.* This was a most comfortable promise to our first parents, and the whole Church in all succeeding ages ; while, at the same time, it contained a most awful denunciation of divine wrath and displeasure, against Satan and all the powers of darkness.

2. We observe, that from the first erection of the throne and kingdom of Christ to this day, they stand as he ordained. Many sore and shaking storms has the Church withstood. She subsisted amidst an awful torrent of wickedness in the first ages of the world, and survived a flood which proved fatal to every other kingdom under heaven, 1 Pet. ii. 5. In the patriarchial age, when the kingdom of Christ was small, and his subjects few in number, sojourning as so many pilgrims from one nation to another, and from one kingdom to another people, no man was suffered to do them wrong, Psal. cv. 13, 14, 15. When Jacob went down to Egypt, and sojourned in the land of Ham, the Lord went with him, and made good the promise to his seed ; *I will surely bring thee up again,* Gen. xlv. 4. All the impious stratagems of Pharaoh, assisted by the policy of hell, could not prove destructive to this kingdom ; but the more it was
oppressed,

oppressed, the more it multiplied and grew; and when the time of its promised deliverance from Egyptian bondage was fully come, at the expence of many miracles, both of mercy to the Church, and of judgments upon her enemies, the Lord brought his elect, his chosen, into the land he had promised unto their fathers; erected them into a national church, and built his sanctuary among them like a fair palace, and like the earth which he hath founded unto perpetuity. And having preserved this kingdom all along during the Old Testament dispensation, we may say, by one continued miracle, considering its own weakness, and the multitude and strength of its enemies, so the united force of hell and earth could not stand in the way of its erection and establishment among the Gentile nations, Psal. ii. 1. Many floods Satan has cast out of his mouth of purpose to swallow up this kingdom; floods of error, profanity and persecution. How awfully was this kingdom thrust at in the first ages of Christianity, both by Rome, Pagan and Christian! And much it has suffered in the lands of our nativity, from Popish and Prelatical tyranny; but as often as the enemy has come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord has lifted up the standard against him.

3. We observe, that as the throne and kingdom of our Lord Jesus has stood from its first erection till now, it will continue through all succeeding ages and generations. Though the kingdom of Christ, as externally administred, may be sometimes more, and sometimes less visible, as it has been in former ages, the Lord will have a confessing and professing Church in one place of the world or other, to latest posterity. *A seed shall serve him, it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation. They shall come, and they shall declare his*

his righteousness to a people that shall be born: And that he hath done this, Psal. xxii. 30, 31. Our glorious IMMANUEL shall see his seed; and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand, Isa. liii.

II. Zion's King is himself the rock upon which the Church is built, and the gates of hell, that is, all the power and policy of hell, shall not prevail against her. The Lord ever has been, and ever will be known in her places for a refuge.

4. We observe, that tho' the kingdom of Christ, considered as to its present form of administration in the world, consisting in the preaching of the word, the dispensation of the sacraments, and application of the censures, will come to an end; these ordinances being no further necessary, once that the saints are perfected; yet, substantially considered, it shall be for ever and ever. This is evident from the Father's promise to Christ, which is ratified by his oath, Psal. lxxxix. 35, 36, 37. "Once," (says he) "have I sworn by my holiness, that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun be-fore me. It shall be established for ever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in the heavens, Selah." These words must certainly be considered as carrying the reign of Christ, in and over the Church, beyond the line of time; for we have no reason to apprehend but the sun and moon shall endure for ever, though they will not always serve the same purposes for which we now have them. But it may be objected from Psal. cx. 1. Our Lord Jesus has a commission to reign as Mediator, only until his enemies be made his footstool, which certainly must be the case at the last day; and from 1 Cor. xv. 24. At the end of the world, he shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father. We answer, by the kingdom mentioned

in the last of these texts, we may understand the subjects of the kingdom; these he will deliver up to the Father, making a faithful and honourable account to him of all his management in the Church militant; he shall present the subjects of the kingdom before the throne of his glory, with exceeding joy, saying, *Here am I, and the children thou hast given me.* As to the first of these texts, it is not to be viewed as setting a period to the time of Christ's reign absolutely; but to the time of his reigning in a certain manner, viz. as surrounded with enemies, and with the use of outward means, instruments and ordinances. *He must reign* saith the Apostle, *until his enemies be made his footstool,* 1 Cor. xv. 25. that is, his kingdom shall continue so long, even in the midst of his enemies, and in spite of all their power and malice, which was the only thing liable to any doubt. For that Christ shall continue to reign, after the conquest and utter ruin of all his enemies, is out of all question, though he will reign in a manner very different from what he now does; for of *the increase of his government and peace, there shall be no end.* But this leads us to what was *secondly* proposed here, which was to shew in some particulars, that the Church is *for ever and ever*: And this will appear when we consider,

1. That as the King is *for ever and ever*, so are the *subjects* of his kingdom. The subjects indeed had a beginning, but they are to have no end. All the true subjects of Christ having *received abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by him,* Rom. v. 17. They are all united to him, and death cannot dissolve that union: When they have served their generations in this world according to his will, he will make them fixed pillars in his Father's house above, Rev. iii. 12. "Him
"that

“that overcometh, will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out.” And saith the Apostle in the name of all believers, 1 Theff. iv. 17. “We shall be ever with the Lord.” It is true, the enemies of Zion’s King are to exist for ever as really as his friends; but their continual existence will crown their misery, and render it altogether intollerable; whereas, in the case of the saints, it will set the cope-stone upon their felicity.

2. The *laws* of the kingdom are for ever and ever. The moral law being founded in the nature and perfections of God, and, as it were, a transcript of his image, is lasting and permanent as God himself. Particularly, the great and royal law of Christ’s kingdom; the *law of love*, love to the Head, and to the members in him. The most perfect obedience will be given to the *law of love* in the kingdom of glory. The duty of love will flourish when the exercise of other graces will be laid aside. 1 Cor. xiii. 8. *Charity never faileth*; and, in verse 13th *charity* is said to be greater than *faith* or *hope*: *Charity* or *love* will abound when these are swallowed up; the one in vision and the other in fruition. When our Lord urges the duty of mutual *love* upon his Disciples, he calls it a *new commandment*, John xiii. 34. A commandment which he set before them in a manner very new and different from that, in which it was held forth by the corrupt teachers among the Jews; a commandment enforced with the new and astonishing motive of his *love* to his people, evidenced by his *laying down his life for them*. And, as an excellent song, is called a *new one*, Psal. xxxiii. 3. We apprehend our Lord designs the commandment to *love* a *new one*, in regard of its excellent and lasting nature; it is new in such a manner as to be for ever new.

3. The

3. The treasures of the kingdom are for ever and ever. These are the unsearchable riches of Christ, Eph. iii. 8. The virtue and efficacy of the Redeemer's blood, with all spiritual blessings purchased thereby, which may be summed up in grace and glory, are for ever and ever. "The tree of life in the midst of the Paradise of God, will yield his fruit every month," Rev. xxii. 2. The hidden manna shall not fail. The river that makes glad the city of God, shall be ever full. And as none of these shall ever fail, the blood and righteousness of Zion's King, which he will for ever present before God, shall prove the stable and lasting ground of the saints, their continuing in the everlasting enjoyment of them. That which hath procured their entrance into the holy place not made with hands, shall effectually secure their continuing there for ever, namely, the blood of Jesus, Heb. ix. 12. That is the price whereby they are redeemed unto God; Rev. v. 9. and the ground upon which they shall stand for ever before him with acceptance.

4. The revenue of the kingdom is for ever and ever. The united praises of the saints is the revenue of the kingdom. "Israel shall for ever rejoice in him that made him, and the children of Zion shall be joyful in their King," Psal. cxlvi. 2. Petition and confession shall give way to eternal thanksgiving and praise, to him that sitteth on the throne, and the Lamb that was slain. Zion's King shall inhabit Israel's praises for ever: He gave himself for the spiritual Israel, that they might be firm for himself to shew forth his praise, Isa. xxxiii. 21. And their praises shall wait for him in the mount Zion above for ever, and there shall the vow be performed: There his servants shall serve him day and night, Rev. iv. 8. and yet they shall not

not weary, for their *work* shall be their *rest*, and the *joy of the Lord* their *strength*, in singing the heavenly anthem, Rev. v. 12. "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing."

5. and lastly, The *charter of the kingdom* is for ever and ever. The charter by which the saints of the Most High, get, and keep possession of the kingdom, is the *new-covenant* ratified and confirmed by the blood of Jesus. This covenant bears date from eternity, Tit. i. 2. It stands fast between two immutable persons, and cannot be broken. It is the believer's stay and support under all his tribulations in a present world, 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. For, whatever changes may take place with him, and however threatening like the aspect of Providence may be towards him at any time, this is his comfort, "That God has made with him, or for him, an everlasting covenant, that he will not turn away from him to do him good," Jerem. xxxii. 40. Whatever confusion may take place in the world, and whatever inward disorders may prevail in the heart of the believer, he may hear God saying to him amidst them all, "The mountains may depart and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the LORD, that hath mercy on thee," Isa. liv. 10. The *new covenant* is the *rainbow that incircles the throne of God and the Lamb*, Rev. iv. 3. and it will be ever green, subject to no change or alteration. This is a far more glorious charter than that by which Adam would have got and kept possession of the heavenly kingdom, though he had never sinned.

III. The

III. The *third* thing in the method, was to shew that the kingdom of our Lord Jesus is ruled in the most just and equitable manner; and this will appear when we consider,

1. That there is a *righteous Prince* upon the throne. He came to the throne in a just and righteous manner; it was by the appointment of God the Father, Psal. ii. 6. Hence, when our Lord Jesus came to set up his kingdom in the Gentile world, he produced his warrant from the highest authority, Psal. ii. 7. "I will declare the decree: "The LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son "this day have I begotten thee." And as he came to possess his kingdom in a just and equitable manner, "he reigns in righteousness, and rules in "judgment. He is righteous in all his ways, and "holy in all his works," Psal. cxlv. 17. "Righteousness is the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness "the girdle of his reins," Isa. xi. 5. *The King is Judge of all the earth, and cannot but do right. He is just in all his sayings, and clear in all his judgments.*

2. The *laws* of the kingdom are right. The *moral law* contained in the Ten Commandments, is the law by which the King of Zion rules his subjects; and this law being founded in the nature and perfections of God, *is perfect, holy, just and good.* Great and many are the commendations given to the laws of Christ's kingdom by the Holy Ghost in Scripture. "The testimonies thou hast commanded," saith the Psalmist, "are righteous, and very faithful," Psal. cxix. 138. The divine law is exceeding broad, enjoining every duty we owe both to God and man, and forbidding every evil thought, word and action; it is spiritual, reaching the heart, and the righteousness of it is eternal, Psal. cxix. 144. *The righteousness of thy testimonies is*

is everlasting. This law, considered as a covenant of works, is perfectly fulfilled by Christ, and given to the subjects of his kingdom, not to be obeyed in order to life, but as the *rule* of their obedience. The law, as a covenant of works, is dead to believers, and they to it, *by the offering of the body of Christ*, as the Apostle shews at great length in his Epistle to the Romans, chap. 7. After describing the woful condition these Romans were in while under the law as a covenant of works, he adds, verse 6. *but now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held, or we being dead to that wherein we were held, viz. the law in its covenant form, that we should serve him in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the latter.*

3. This truth will appear, when it is considered that our Lord Jesus effectually promotes, and advances the spiritual welfare and advantage of his true subjects, by all his dispensations toward the Church. The good of the subject is aimed at in all well governed kingdoms and commonwealths, yet cannot be always attained by the most loving and intelligent earthly Princes. But, as the King of Zion really intends the good of his subjects in all his administrations, he never fails to obtain his design: Hence saith the Apostle, Rom. viii. 28. "We know that all things work together for good to them who love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." It is true the children of the kingdom do not always see this to be the case; they are sometimes too ready to conclude with Jacob, that these dispensations are against them, which are really working for their good, Gen. xlii. 36. "And Jacob their father said unto them, Me have ye bereaved of my children: Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take away Benjamin also. *All these things are*
" *against*

"against me." The event proved, however, that *all these things were for him.* The Spirit of God tells us, that Abraham the father of the faithful, was *blessed in all things*, Gen. xxiv. 1. He had many trials, and some of them singularly heavy; but in these, as well as in other things, he was blessed; and so are all his spiritual seed, for *they that be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham* Gal. iii. 9. i. e. they are all blessed with the same spiritual blessings, and blessed in all things, whether prosperous or adverse.

4. The sceptre of the kingdom must be right; for the King *loves righteousness, and hates iniquity with a most perfect hatred*, as in the following context; and elsewhere the Psalmist saith, *The righteous Lord loveth righteousness.* To love righteousness is more than to act righteously. Other Princes have sometimes done what was right in itself, while they had no real love to righteousness. This was remarkably the case with Jehu, while executing the just judgment of God upon the house of Ahab: But he neither acted with an eye to the glory of God, nor from any real dislike at the sin of Ahab's family, his chief aim in all being to procure a kingdom to himself. And it is said of one of the kings of Judah, that *he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, but not with a perfect heart*, 2 Chron. xxv. 2. But Zion's King bears an entire love to judgment and righteousness; *his ways are all equal, just, and right*, both toward his friends and foes. His *rendering tribulation to his, and his people's enemies*, and *rest to his friends*, are acts both equally right, 2 Thess. i. 6, 7, 8, 9. "It is a righteous thing with God (saith the Apostle) to render tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall

“ shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty
“ angels,” &c.

5. The *sceptre of Immanuel's kingdom* will appear to be a *right sceptre*, when it is considered that the King not only *loves righteousness*; but is perfectly in case to act according to the desire of his heart. The best of earthly kings have it not always in their power to act so faithfully as they could wish to do; the sons of Zeruiah were too strong for David, though he was anointed king over Israel. But Zion's King is God as well as man, and considered as King in Zion, *the Spirit of the Lord rests upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and of might*, Isa. xi. 2. “ In him
“ are hid all the treasures of wisdom and know-
“ ledge,” Coloss. ii. 3. He knows most perfectly what is for the welfare of his kingdom, and he is wise to order all things to the advancement of his own glory, and the real advantage of his subjects. And he is infinitely powerful to maintain, support, and defend his kingdom, against all the assaults of its adversaries. He is *mighty to save, strong is his hand, and high is his right hand*; he makes the wrath of man to praise him; cuts off the spirits of princes, and appears terrible to the kings of the earth.

6. and lastly, The *justice and equity* of Zion's King in all his dealings, both towards the Church and her enemies, will shine forth in the most conspicuous manner at his second coming. He often manages the affairs of his kingdom now, in a way that is very mysterious; it is not sense and corrupt reason, but faith only, that can assent to the truth contained in the text. *The sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre*. The king is a wonderful person, and his conduct toward the Church is a great depth. *His way is often in the sea, and his paths in the great waters*, so that his footsteps are not seen;

Pfal. lxxvii. 19. He often deals with his friends in appearance, as if they were his enemies; and with his foes, as if they were his friends: Hence saith the Apostle, 1 Cor. xv. 19. "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." He frequently suffers matters, with respect to the Church, to go to the utmost pitch of hopelessness before he sees meet to interpose in her behalf. This was eminently the case with the Church before her deliverance from Egypt; the Babylonish captivity; and in the days of Esther, when Haman had procured the king's decree for the total extirpation of the Jews. This was likewise the case of the Church before her deliverance from butchery and bloodshed, by the instrumentality of Constantine; and at the time both of our first and second Reformations from Popery, and likewise at the memorable Revolution. And, we may add, that matters were come to that crisis with the Church in this nation, that ministerial freedom, in testifying against the encroachments made upon the royal prerogatives of Zion's King, was opposed by the court of last resort, to the degree of ejecting some of its most faithful, zealous and godly members, for their honesty in bearing witness to the free, spiritual, and independent nature of Christ's kingdom, before he was pleased to bring a testimony to the field, for the purity of doctrine, and maintenance of presbyterial Church government, in opposition both to Erastian tyranny, and Independent anarchy and confusion. Now, such a conduct in Divine Providence, toward the Church in general, or the believer in particular, is highly becoming the wisdom of the glorious Head, being calculate to try the faith and patience of the saints, 1 Pet. i. 6, 7. and to discover the naughtiness of the hypocrite, Dan. xii. 10. It is no easy matter,

even

even for the Lord's own people, to know what to make of many of his dispensations toward the Church, while the wicked and ungodly reckon them *foolishness*, stumble and fall over them, until they are *snared, broken, and taken*. It is one special design God has before him in all his providential dispensations toward the Church, *to make foolish the wisdom of this world*: And those who are most ready to charge his dealings toward her with folly, are such whose penetration in natural things exceeds the ordinary measure, 1 Cor. i. 20. "Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?"

The aspect of Divine Providence, toward the Church at this day, is very dark and mysterious; matters seem to be hastening to some awful crisis, with respect to all ranks in these lands, when we consider the pride, profanity, divisions, apostacy, and neutrality about the things of Christ, which so awfully abound in our day. Let us therefore be concerned to *wait upon the Lord who hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and to look for him*; let us not be *offended in him*, or at any part of his conduct toward the Church, in this *day of darkness and confusion*; let us ever mind all is *clear* before his eye, *who rules in Jacob to the ends of the earth*; and that there is a day coming, when the people of God shall see more fully in to the method of Divine Providence than they now do. Our Lord Jesus is saying to all his real subjects, *What I do ye know not now, but ye shall know hereafter*, John xiii. 7. When the mystery of God shall be finished, and the web of providence laid before the saints, in one whole piece, it will appear to be a most beautiful contexture, and every way worthy of him

him who is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working.

IV. The *fourth* head in the method was, to make some improvement of the subject, and this we may do,

First, In an use of information. And,

1. We may see from what has been said, what a weighty and important work it was to redeem the Church, gather her from among the world *lying in wickedness*, wrest her out of the hand of Satan, rule and defend her from all her enemies, when none but an infinite Person was equal to the undertaking. If this burden had not been laid upon him who is God, no other shoulder could have sustained the weight of it; and if he had declined to take it on, *the redemption of the soul would have ceased for ever*, Psal. xlix. 8. With what gratitude then, should we remember the Divine kindness exercised in laying *our help upon one that is mighty*; finding out, and anointing our New Testament David to be our Prophet, Priest, and King!

2. We may see from this subject, the dignity, safety, and happiness of all the true subjects of Christ. It is their highest dignity to have him for their King. Their life and safety lies in their union with, and relation to him. It may, with the greatest propriety, be said to his praise and the comfort of his subjects, what the Queen of Sheba said to Solomon concerning his servants, 1 Kings x. 8. "Happy are thy men, happy are these thy servants, that continually stand before thee, and that hear thy wisdom." To be a true subject of Zion's King, is infinitely preferable to a seat upon the highest earthly throne. All the real subjects of Christ are *kings and priests unto God*; their enemies shall be found liars unto them, and *they shall tread upon their high places*, Deut. xxxiii. 29.

"For

“For there is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven, in the help of his people, and in his excellency on the sky.”

3. See from this subject, how absurd and impious it is, to oppose the kingdom and interests of Christ, and molest his true subjects; *The sceptre of his kingdom is a right sceptre*, and therefore to oppose his rule and government, is in the highest degree both sinful and dangerous. Why should the throne of Christ be an eye-sore to the kingdoms of this world? *it is established in righteousness*, and all his administrations are most just and equitable. Though his kingdom be *in* this world, it is not *of* it, John xviii. 36. He claims nothing that belongs to earthly Princes. Wherever his kingdom comes, it is so far from proving in the least detrimental to the Potentates of the earth, that it tends to establish them in the possession of all their lawful and just rights and dignities. And, as it is a great honour to reign where the children of Zion's King are the subjects, it is still a greater honour for the highest Potentates to be subjects of his kingdom, *who is King of kings and Lord of lords*, and to be made instrumental, in their places and stations, in advancing the interests of his kingdom, for which purposes they are called upon, by the highest authority, Psal. ii. 10, 12. “Be ye instructed, O ye judges of the earth.—Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they who put their trust in him.”

4. Is the sceptre of Christ, a sceptre that is *right*? then we may see how unbecoming his subjects it is to quarrel with, fret and repine at any of his dispensations, either toward the Church in general, or themselves in particular. To spurn at any part of his conduct, is in effect to give JEHOVAH the lie,

lie, when he saith to his Son, *The sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre*; and yet, alas! how often do the children of the kingdom fall into this said mistake? How ready are they to spurn at the cross? and when matters go not to their wish, to put the question, *Hath the Lord forgotten to be gracious? Hath he shut up his tender mercies in his wrath?* This conduct, in the case of believers, is owing to the weakness of their faith, their turning their eye off from the promise, and listening to the temptations of the wicked one. Would they look at Divine providences in the glass of the promise, though Providence should for a while seem to run cross to the promise, they would find in their comfortable experience, Providence and the Promise mutually embracing each other in due time. God's design in all his providential conduct, being to give an actual accomplishment to his word, both as intimating his gracious designs toward the Church, and his just displeasure against his and her enemies.

5. We may see that those who are determined by grace to give up themselves to Christ, to be saved by him, and serve him, are not such fools as the world takes them to be. The greater part of men cannot endure to take on the yoke of Christ; particularly in times of trial, many reckon it neither safe nor prudent so much as to profess subjection to Zion's King; yea, they look upon them as fools who do it. But the man who gives up himself to Christ, submits to his righteousness, and takes on the yoke of his commandments, while he gives glory to God in so doing, he at the same time acts the most wise and prudent part for himself. *He foresees the evil and hides himself, while the simple pass on and are punished.* When once persons are brought to submit to Christ's righteous sceptre,
all

all things work for their good. And even when *clouds and darkness* are round about the King, *justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne.* He is managing all things in his kingdom for the advancement of his own glory, and the real good of his subjects, whether for the time they see him to be doing so, or not.

6. Hence see the need we have of faith, to believe that Zion's King is doing all things well, even *when his way is in the sea, and his paths in the deep waters.* *The sceptre of his kingdom is always right,* being managed by an infinitely holy and skilful hand: But without faith, and faith in exercise, we cannot see it to be so; we are ready to be overwhelmed with the dark and cloudy dispensations which sometimes befall the Church in general, and the believer in particular, as we see was the case with Heman, Psal. lxxiii. 13. But when faith is in exercise, it can look through dark clouds, and draw strength and comfort to the soul from a God in Christ, and justify the divine procedure in every condition. Faith lets the man see, that Christ is doing all things in the best manner, and so keeps him from fretting at, or sinking under the most cross and trying dispensations of Providence the Lord sees meet to try him with. This the Psalmist found in his sweet experience, Psal. xxvii. 13. *I had fainted (says he) unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.* However dark the night may be either with the Church or the particular believer, faith in God's promise sees the *day approaching*, and can challenge every insulting adversary, in that bold and triumphing language you have, Micah vii. 8, 9. "Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy: When I fall I shall arise; when I sit in darkness the LORD shall be a light unto me. I will bear the indignation of the LORD, because

“ because I have sinned against him, until he plead
 “ my cause, and execute judgment for me : He will
 “ bring me forth unto the light, and I shall behold
 “ his righteousness; and she that is mine enemy
 “ shall see it, and shame shall cover her who said
 “ unto me, Where is the Lord thy God ?” When
 we consider the preceding part of the chapter, we
 find matters were very dark with the Church, cor-
 ruptions were sadly abounding among Church-mem-
 bers, and the Edumeans and Babylonians rejoicing
 in the calamities the godly were brought under.
 In that sad case, the Church resolves to look to
 the Lord, verse 7th ; and having got a faith’s view
 of him as her God in covenant, she takes up a song
 of triumph over all his and her enemies.

7. Is the *sceptre* of IMMANUEL’s kingdom a *right
 sceptre* ? then see how much it concerns all the sub-
 jects of his kingdom, to endeavour to imitate their
 King, in acting a faithful, just and righteous part
 in their places and stations toward him, one ano-
 ther, and all with whom they have occasion to be
 conversant. How careful should ministers of the
 gospel be in their stations to imitate the Prince,
 whose ambassadors they are ? Great is the trust the
 King has committed to them, as instruments in his
 hand : He has given them the keys of the kingdom,
 and made them stewards of the mysteries of God ;
 and it is required of a steward, that a man be
 found faithful. The King himself is *faithful as a
 Son over his own house*, and his ministers should aim
 at being faithful in all his house as servants. This
 is at once their indispensable duty and highest ho-
 nour.

How careful should they be “ rightly to divide
 “ the word of truth, not shunning to declare the
 “ whole counsel of God, whether those to whom
 “ they are sent will hear or forbear ?” How care-
 ful

ful should they be to explain the laws of the kingdom, and apply the censures of the Church to their proper objects, for the purging out of heresies and scandals without respect of persons; according to the charge given to Timothy, and in him, to all the ministers of Christ, 1 Tim. v. 21. How much does it concern them carefully to observe the comely order Christ has appointed in the Church? The exhortation we have, Psal. xlviii. 12, 13. "Walk about Zion, and go round about her: Tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces, &c." is in an eminent manner expressive of the duty of gospel-ministers, with reference to the order that Christ has settled in the Church. Which order and government, is neither Erastian on the one hand, nor Independent on the other, but Presbyterial, consisting in the due subordination of one judicatory to another, as is clear from Matth. xviii. 15,—19. chap. xvi. 19. Acts xiii. 1,—4. 1 Tim. iv. 14. Acts xv. with many other texts which might be adduced. That Presbytery is the only form of government the Lord Jesus has appointed to be observed in the Church, is made evident to every unprejudiced mind, in the Propositions concerning Church-government, bound in with our excellent Confession of Faith, together with several other learned tracts, which have been wrote on that subject by divines eminent for piety and learning; and these, both in this, and in our neighbouring kingdoms, in their contending for Presbytery against Erastianism on the one hand, and Independency on the other.

It is much to be lamented in the day we live in, that this order is so much either slighted, or directly inverted by many, who would be considered as office-bearers in the Church. Many are on the matter giving up the external order and government

of the Church to the civil magistrate, whereby Zion's King is greatly dishonoured, being robbed of his royal prerogative as Head over his own house. And as this is the course many are taking on the one hand, some are falling off to Independency on the other; by which, as they are pleased to speak, the keys of discipline and order are given to the community of the faithful; the native consequence of which is, that anarchy and confusion take the place of regular order and government. And indeed it may be observed, that so soon as we see either ministers or people falling off to Independency, we generally see them fall into confusion, going from one thing to another, without having any settled point of principle, not unlike those the Apostle describes, 2 Tim. iii. 7. "Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth."

8. and *lastly*, We may infer from this subject, that we should be constantly upon our guard, against judging rashly about any part of Christ's management in his kingdom, that may for the time appear unaccountable to us. It is not for us to know the times and seasons he has kept in his own hand. *His sceptre is right*, though we cannot always see him; yet *judgment is before him*, therefore let us *trust in him*. *His legs are like pillars of marble, set upon sockets of fine gold, and his hands, i. e.* all his handy works, *are like gold rings set with the beryl*, Cant. v. 14, 15. He is steadily and effectually prosecuting the ends of his own glory, and the eternal good and welfare of all his true subjects, even amidst the darkest dispensations of his Providence. And however much his enemies may charge him with folly and injustice, saying, *The way of the Lord is not equal*, he will in due time render the justice and propriety of all his administrations conspicuous,

to the compleat satisfaction of all his true subjects, and the confusion of their malicious foes.

Secondly, This subject might be improv'd in an use of trial and examination. On this we shall not insist at any length. You are all the subjects of Zion's King in respect of external profession and privilege: But there are many who are the subjects of Christ in these respects, who are really the subjects of Satan. It concerns you therefore to try, whether you be among the true subjects of Christ or not; and if you are really so,

Zion's King has the throne of your hearts; he possesses the highest room there, and Satan is dethroned, Luke xi. 21. You are in some measure acquainted with spiritual light and liberty. The kingdom of Satan is a kingdom of *slavery and darkness*; but the kingdom of Christ, is a kingdom of *light and liberty*. If you are *translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son*, he has brought you out of *darkness*, and from the *shadow of death*, and broken your spiritual bands asunder, Psal. cvii. 14. If you are the true subjects of Zion's King, you highly prize every thing belonging to his kingdom; you love the King himself; there is none like him in your esteem, Psal. lxxiii. 25. You love the laws of the kingdom, the charter of the kingdom, your fellow subjects, and the peace and prosperity of the kingdom; you love the increase of the kingdom, and you pray for it, when you agent your own cause at his throne; or rather, when you employ him as your Advocate to do it. If you are his true subjects, you are careful to bring in the revenue that is due to your King; your praises are waiting for him, both in Zion and in the dwellings of Jacob. You are the people whom he has *formed for himself*; and you evidence yourselves to be so, by *shewing forth his praise*, Isa. xliii. 21. If
you

you are his true subjects, you are sensibly touched with all the dishonours you see done to him; you are grieved because of those that rise up against him; and, while you daily behold some despising the doctrines of the kingdom, others the discipline and government of it, and multitudes careless and indifferent about the King himself, and every thing concerning his kingdom, it fills your hearts with grief and sorrow. In one word, if you are the true subjects of Christ, planted in his house by his grace, you sometimes long for the coming of the kingdom of glory, and you are labouring after meetness for being made *partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light*; and thankful for what begun experience you have of that meetness.

The *last* use of the doctrine may be in a word of exhortation. And,

1. We exhort you who are the true subjects of Zion's King, to be thankful to God for erecting a kingdom of grace in the world, and particularly that he has set it up in the Gentile world, where by he has caused *songs to be heard from the uttermost ends of the earth: even glory to the righteous*, Isa. xxiv. 16. Be thankful to him for bringing you from under the *power of darkness* into his kingdom of *light, life, and spiritual liberty*. He has delivered you out of the horrible pit of your natural state, at the expence of the precious blood of his own Son, and by the power of his Spirit; and thus begun your meetness *to be partakers of the heavenly kingdom*, Coloss. i. 12, 13. which affords you the most solid and lasting ground of praise and thanksgiving. We exhort you to seek the advancement of the honour and glory of your King, in your day and generation; and as you would live to his honour and glory, go out to daily duty and difficulty in the strength of his grace, making mention
of

of his righteousness, as the alone ground of your access to, and acceptance with God. Be not discouraged though clouds and darkness may be round about your King, as to the manner of his dealing with the Church, or your own souls. He has done great things for the Church already, and *glorious things are spoken concerning her*, which are yet to be accomplished. He may change in his dispensations toward the Church in general, and your own souls in particular; but he is still the same in himself, and in his love to his Church and people. He may seem in their apprehension, to forget and forsake them, but he cannot do it in reality, Isa. xlix. 14, 15. But Zion said, *The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me*; but was that true? No, "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion upon the son of her womb? yea, they may forget," (such monsters in nature may perhaps be found) "yet will I not forget thee, saith the LORD." And what he here says concerning the Church in general, he is likewise saying it concerning every true Church-member.

In one word, we exhort you to look forward to the happy period, when you shall be admitted to the possession of the kingdom of glory; admitted to sit down with the King upon his throne, Rev. iii. 21. That joyful day; that morning without a cloud, when *the King's daughter shall enter into his palace, no more to go out*. Then your sun shall no more go down, nor your moon withdraw herself; but the Lord shall be your everlasting light, and the days of your mourning shall be ended.

2. We exhort all who are yet enemies to Zion's King, young and old, poor and rich, to consider the sinfulness and danger of continuing in that condition. O sinners, what are you doing, while you
continue

continue to be his enemies? Why, "you are *treasuring up wrath to yourselves, against the day of wrath, and the revelation of the righteous judgment of God,*" Rom. ii. 5. All who *hate* this glorious King they *love death*: Oh! consider, that if you live and die his enemies, a dreadful eternity is awaiting you. Our Lord Jesus is now upon his throne of grace, and waiting to be gracious: But if you continue to slight his gracious offers and tenders of mercy, know that it is but a little while, and he will mount his great white throne of judgment, and then will he give charge concerning all his enemies, saying, *These mine enemies, who would not that I should reign over them, bring them hither, and slay them before me.* Oh! then, while it is called *To-day*, *harden not your hearts*. He is yet calling you to *break your league with hell, and your agreement with death*. Submit to his righteousness, and take on his yoke. "Come unto me," says he, "all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and you shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." These words contain a most solemn call and invitation to sinners of mankind, without exception of any one, on this side hell, to come and take up with Christ by faith, as their Prophet, Priest, and King; and to make a surrender of themselves to him, to be saved by him, and to serve him. The call and invitation is not to be viewed, as confined to persons sensibly labouring under the burden of sin, though these only will comply with the call and invitation; but the words point out, what is the real condition of fallen man, whether he is sensible of it or not. Man is lying under a burden of guilt, as to the conscience, and he needs rest. He is under a burden

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den of wants, and needs them supplied. One is labouring for rest to the soul in the fiery region of the law; another is seeking it among the cisterns of created comforts, &c. but all in vain; *money is spent for that which is not bread, and labour for that which satisfieth not; but come unto me, saith Christ, and ye shall find rest, and solid satisfaction; rest to the soul now, from the guilt and reigning power of sin, and rest for the whole man in due time, where the inhabitant shall not say I am sick, the people that dwell therein having their iniquities forgiven.*

S E R M O N IX.

JESUS CHRIST anointed with the Oil of Gladness above his Fellows.

PSAL. xlv. 7.

*Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness :
Therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with
the oil of gladness above thy fellows.*

THAT these are the words of JEHOVAH the Father to his eternal Son, considered as sustaining the character of our Redeemer, is put beyond question by an inspired Apostle, Heb. i. 8, 9. And they are fully expressive of the great delight and satisfaction that God the Father takes in Jesus Christ, and in the work of our redemption undertaken and finished by him. "Thou lovest righteousness," says he, "and hatest wickedness; therefore God,
" thy

“thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.”

In these words we may observe,

1. Two things affirmed concerning our glorious IMMANUEL, namely, That he loves righteousness and hates wickedness. This is an high character, and given by one whose judgment is according to truth. To love righteousness is much more than to act righteously. Our Lord Jesus has not only done that which is right in itself, but he has done, and does all from a most entire love to righteousness. He is the *righteous Lord*, and he *loveth righteousness*, Psal. xi. 7. And as he loves righteousness, so he hates wickedness. To *love righteousness* and *hate wickedness*, are inseparably connected together; whoever loves the former must hate the latter: Our Lord Jesus, considered as God equal with the Father, loves righteousness and hates wickedness, by a necessity of nature; and viewed as man, and Mediator between God and man, he has given the most perfect and convincing proofs of his regard for righteousness, and abhorrence of all iniquity.

2. It is affirmed concerning our Lord Jesus, that *he is anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows*. We take our Lord's anointing here, chiefly to denote his exaltation, according to the use the Apostle makes of this text in that forecited Heb. i. 9. And so his being said to be anointed, seems to be expressive of all that glory and dignity, to which he is now advanced at the Father's right hand, in consequence of his having finished his work on earth. And what is here intended by his being anointed is more fully declared, Philip. ii. 8, 9, 10. To *anoint*, in scripture, frequently signifies the designation and appointment of a person to an high and dignified station, as well as the conferring of inward gifts and endowments upon one. Ezek. xxviii. 14.

Thou

Thou art the anointed Cherub, that is, thou art an highly dignified person. Our Lord Jesus is now highly exalted, having a name given him which is above every name.

3. We may notice wherewith he is said to be anointed, it is *with the oil of gladness*. This intimates the great joy and satisfaction which he found in his exaltation, arising from the Father's hearty approbation of all he had done in the purchase of redemption, and the certainty he had of success in the application of it, Isa. liii. 11. He sat down upon the throne of his glory, fully assured, that he *should see the travel of his soul to his eternal satisfaction*. This joy of his exalted state, we find him setting before his eye in his humbled condition, Heb. xii. 2. And in the most assured prospect of it, he *endured the cross, despising the shame*. Oil makes the countenance to shine, Psal. civ. 15. and the heart to rejoice, Prov. xxvii. 9. And such were the effects our Lord experienced in his exaltation. At his solemn instalment in his kingdom he really found what he promised to himself, when taking a distant view of the glory that should follow upon his sufferings, Psal. xvi. 11. "In thy presence is fulness of joy, at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore."

4. Notice by whom our Lord is anointed, namely, God in the person of the Father. *God, thy God, hath anointed thee*. "I who am thy God hath anointed thee;" or, "I will anoint thee." God the Father is his God, considered as man and Mediator, and our God and Father in him, as our Lord intimates, John xx. 17. When the Father saith, *God, thy God, will anoint thee*, the doubling of the expression may intimate the certainty of the matter, and the greatness of the anointing. Or we may view the doubling of the expression, *God,*

thy God, as setting forth JEHOVAH, both in his absolute greatness, as able to give a being to the accomplishment of all his promises, both to the Head and the spiritual seed in him; and also the certainty with which we may expect he will do it, from the covenant-relation in which he stands to them: *God, thy God, hath anointed thee*, he will most assuredly do it, he hath done it, he hath said he will do it, and therefore it is as good as done.

5. We may notice the degree of our Lord's anointing. He is anointed *above his fellows*. All his fellows are anointed, but he is anointed *above* them; in the throne he is higher than they.

By Christ's *fellows*, we may not only understand Prophets, Priests, and Kings, who were anointed with the holy perfume, which was typical of the gifts and graces of the holy Spirit, but also all true believers, who have the unction from him, and *are made Kings and Priests unto God*, Rev. i. 6. All true believers have fellowship with Christ in grace, and shall have communion with him in glory. But he will enjoy the portion of the *first-born among the many brethren* in glory, Rom. viii. 29.

6. and *lastly*, We may observe the connection betwixt the first and last clauses of the verse, in the illative particle *therefore*. "Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." Those who view the exaltation of Christ as the reward of his humiliation, consider the particle *therefore*, as denoting the meritorious cause of his glorification. As if the Father had said, "Because thou hast given so many proofs of thy love to righteousness, and of thy hatred of sin, both in the course of thy life, and also by thy death; therefore thy God hath exalted thee far above all men and angels, to a state of endless glory

glory at his right hand." Those again, who view our Lord's exaltation as the free gift of God, consider the particle *therefore*, as denoting the order of his glorification, *viz.* as being only consequential of his humiliation. But, as it appears somewhat difficult positively to determine in which of these senses the word is to be taken, so as to exclude the other, and as there are Divines, eminent both for piety and learning, upon both sides of the question, *viz.* whether our Lord merited his exaltation by his humiliation; or whether the first is to be viewed as freely conferred in consequence of the latter, we shall not detain you with controversy about it at present. What we need especially to know and believe, is, that Christ by his humiliation has merited our exaltation.

The general doctrine of the text is :

Doct. *Our Lord Jesus Christ, in consequence of the great and many proofs he has given of his love to righteousness, and hatred of sin, both in his life and by his death, is now anointed, or exalted by God the Father above all his fellows.*

The method we shall, through Divine assistance, observe, in speaking a little to this text and doctrine, is,

I. To speak of that fellowship that is betwixt Christ and all true believers, and on account of which they are called *his fellows*.

II. Discourse a little concerning our Lord's exaltation, here called his being *anointed with the oil of gladness*.

III. Shew in what respects Jesus Christ is exalted, or *anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows*.

IV. Apply.

We

We might here, with propriety enough, have discoursed concerning the evidences our Lord Jesus has given, and still continues to give, of his love to righteousness, and hatred of wickedness; and of the exaltation or anointing of all true believers with the oil of gladness, which is begun in grace, and consummated in glory. But as the things proposed to be spoke to, seem to be mainly intended in the text, we shall pass these at this time.

I. The first thing proposed, was to speak of that fellowship that is between Christ and all true believers, and on account of which, they are here called *his fellows*. And, in speaking to this, we shall,

First, lay down a few general observations; and, *secondly*, enquire a little into that fellowship that takes place between Christ and all his younger brethren.

It was proposed, *first*, to lay down a few general observations. And,

1. We observe, that all the fellowship which any of the sons of men have with Christ, is founded in union to his person and reconciliation to God through him. "Two cannot walk together, except they be agreed," Amos iii. 3. "What communion hath light with darkness? And what concord is there between Christ and Belial?" The door of the heart which is naturally shut against Christ, must be opened by the power of Divine grace, and he must graciously come unto it before he can sup with us, and we with him.

2. We observe, that the fellowship that is betwixt Christ and believers, does not constitute an equality between him and them. The union that is made up betwixt Christ and the believer, in the day of effectual calling, leaves them still distinct persons. And the fellowship they have together does not lift up the believer to the same state of dignity
with

with Christ. He is the *first-born among the many brethren*, Rom. viii. 31. *In all things he hath the pre-eminence.* The right of primogeniture is his, Psal. ii. 7. The whole inheritance of grace and glory is his by a right, both natural and acquired. *As the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, so is he among the sons.*

3. We observe, that as our Lord Jesus was alone in the work of redemption, having no hand either of man or angel to help him, as he tells us, Isa. lxiii. 3. "I have trodden the wine press alone, and of the people there was none with me;" so he has no partners in the glory resulting therefrom. The whole burden of building the spiritual temple lies upon him, and *he alone shall bear the glory*, Zech. vi. 13. "God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name," Philip. ii. 9. And though impious Papists would share the glory due to his worthy name among saints and angels, we see they all decline the honour; and declare in one voice, that he alone is worthy to bear it, Rev. v. 11, 12. "And I beheld," saith John, "and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts, and the elders: And the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing." "sing."

4. and *lastly*, We observe, that there is nevertheless a fellowship between our Lord Jesus and all his younger brethren. Believers being united to the person of Christ in the day of their espousals with him, he casts his skirt over them, and they become his. And having given himself to them, he gives them an interest in all that is his. Hence, when

when the Apostle would put an end to the contention that was among the Corinthians, about who were of Paul, of Apollos and of Cephas, he tells them that *all things were theirs*: "Let no man glory
 "in men, (says he,) for all things are yours;
 "whether Paul or Apollos, or Cephas, or the
 "world, or life, or death, or things present, or
 "things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's,
 "and Christ is God's," 1 Cor. iii. 21, 22, 23. Who can count the believer's riches? A three one God in Christ is his; ministers of the gospel in all their gifts and endowments are his, for his edification. The world is his, and it behoved to be all at his service, if he really stood in need of it. Life is his; he is the only man who enjoys the comforts of life, and is answering the end of it; death, which, considered in itself, is of all things the most terrible, is his, to end his troubles, and bring him to the complete possession of the joy of his Lord. Things present are his, whether they be prosperous or adverse, they must *all work for his good*, Rom. viii. 28.; and things to come of whatever kind they may be, must all issue in his spiritual and eternal welfare.

It was proposed, *secondly* on this head, to enquire a little more particularly into that fellowship that takes place betwixt Christ and all his younger brethren. And,

1. All true believers partake with Christ in the relation in which he stands to God as his God and Father. Hence says he to Mary, after his resurrection, "Go to my brethren, and say unto them, "I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and "to my God and your God," John xx. 17. Our Lord Jesus is indeed the Son of God, in such a manner as excludes any partnership with him in that relation. He is the Son of God by eternal generation;

ration; but all believers are his sons by regeneration and adoption. To be sons of God in these respects, is the privilege of as many as believe in Christ, John i. 12. And saith the Apostle Paul elsewhere to the believing Galatians, "Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." Our Lord Jesus, considered as man and Mediator, stands related to God as his God; this relation the Father acknowledges in the text, *God, thy God, hath anointed thee*, says he. This relation we find our Lord frequently claiming the comfort of, particularly upon the cross; and as God is his God in virtue of the new Covenant, so he is the believer's God in him.

2. All true believers partake with Christ in the love and kindness of God, which naturally flows from the fatherly relation in which he stands to them. Accordingly, when our Lord speaks of his Father's love to him, and to all his younger brethren, in his intercessory prayer, he saith concerning his Disciples, "Thou hast loved them as thou hast loved me," John xvii. 23. It is true indeed, there are many respects in which the love of God is not, nor can be the same to believers, that it is to his only begotten Son.

He loves his own Son with a necessary love. He cannot but love him, being *the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person*. But his love to believers is absolutely free and sovereign, Hosea xiv. 4. He loves his own Son with a deserved love; he is worthy of his Father's love and highest esteem; but believers are altogether unworthy of his regard. He loves his own Son with a reciprocal love. The Son loves the Father as much as the Father loves and delights in him. There is no love lost betwixt them. But though all true believers love God as the fruit of his love shed

shed abroad in their hearts by the holy Spirit, their love to him is infinitely less porportioned to his for them, than the drop in the bucket is to the ocean. But though the love of God to his own Son and to his younger brethren, differs in these and many other respects, yet his love to believers is, in many respects, similar to his love to Christ, in whom he hath made them accepted. Does his love to his own Son bear date from eternity? So does it toward all his younger brethren, Jerem. xxxi. 3. Does he love his Son with an unchangeable love? Such is the nature of his love to his people, and such it must be, for it rests upon his love to his own Son, upon whom it first terminates as the prime elect, John xvii. 24. Does God love his Son with a love of complacency and delight? In the same manner does he love all his spiritual seed, Zeph. iii. 17. "The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy, he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing."

3. All true believers are fellow heirs with Christ of the same inheritance. Being children by regeneration and adoption, they are *heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ*, Rom. viii. 17. They may join in the same song with their elder Brother, saying, "The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup; thou maintainest my lot. The lines are fallen to me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage." They have God for their God, Jesus Christ for their Saviour, and the holy Spirit as their Sanctifier, Comforter and Guide to the land of uprightness. Their inheritance contains all good in it, and it shall not fade away, Rev. xxi. 7. "He that overcometh shall inherit all things, and I will be his God, and he shall be my son."

4. Believers partake of the same Spirit with Christ; they are anointed with the same oil of gladness that was poured upon him without measure. The same Spirit animates both head and members, in so much, that *he who is joined to Christ*, is said to be *one spirit with him*, 1 Cor. vi. 17. He received the Spirit, not only for himself, to fit and qualify him in the human nature for the great work of our redemption; but he received him that he might give him to all his younger brethren. Hence believers are said to "receive the unction from him," 1 John ii. 20. and to be "sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, as the earnest of their inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession," Eph. i. 13. Believers are sealed with the Spirit, not merely by the Spirit in his gifts and graces, but the Spirit himself is the seal, and without this seal, Christ will acknowledge none to be his, Rom. viii. 9. The holy Spirit dwells in believers by a personal inhabitation, as seems undeniably clear from John iv. 14. compared with chap. vii. 37, 38. And the bodies of believers are said to be *temples* for the holy Ghost to dwell in.

5. Believers may be called *Christ's fellows*, as they partake with him in his dignities. Is he a Son? so are they, as has been already observed. Is he a Priest, and a Priest upon his throne? then they are also *a chosen generation, a royal priesthood*, 1 Pet. ii. 9. They present themselves as *living sacrifices unto God*, Rom. xii. 1. They give their own selves unto the Lord, 2 Cor. viii. 5. And they offer the sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving to God by Jesus Christ, Heb. xiii. 15. Is he a King? then he is such a King as has made all his younger brethren *Kings unto God*, Rev. i. 6. All true believers have a kingly power and dignity conferred upon them. They reign as kings even upon the earth;

they live above the world; for it is crucified to them, and they to it, Gal. vi. 14. They have dominion over these unruly lusts and corruptions to which the rest of the world are slaves. They "are
 " Christ's, and so have crucified the flesh, with the
 " affections and lusts. And having received abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness,
 " they shall reign in life by one Jesus Christ," Rom. v. 17. And, says our Lord, Rev. iii. 21. "To
 " him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me
 " on my throne, even as I also overcame, and am
 " set down with my Father in his throne."

6. Believers have fellowship with Christ in his death, with respect to its fruits and effects. The Apostle Paul knew Christ in the fellowship of his sufferings, and wished to be more into that fellowship, Philip. iii. 10. "That I may know him, (says
 " he) in the power of his resurrection, and the
 " fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death." Jesus Christ got free of the burden of sin that lay upon him by imputation, when he yielded up the ghost. *He died unto sin*, saith the Apostle, Rom. vi. 10, 11. And as he died unto sin, so all believers are set free from the guilt and reigning power of it also. The Apostle exhorts them in the faith's consideration of Christ his *having died once, and died to sin; and in that he now lives, and lives unto God*; to reckon themselves likewise to be *dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord*. When our glorious Surety took the last step in his humbled estate, his judgment was taken away; that is, he was discharged of all the debt he stood chargeable with as the Surety of an elect world. And in virtue of what he has done and suffered, the judgment of believers, or the sentence of condemnation under which they lay, is also taken away.

7. As believers have fellowship with Christ in the fruits of his death, so they have sometimes the honour of being fellow-sufferers with him. They have no share with him in meriting any thing by what they suffer; their sufferings can merit nothing for them; but then, his people are often called to suffer for his sake. Christ suffered and died, not only to satisfy the justice of God for our sins, though this was the principal design of his death, in subordination to the glory of God; but he may be said to have died also as a martyr, particularly for the truth of his Kingly office. And when his people are called out to suffer for the truths of God, so near is their relation to him, that he reckons himself suffering in them; according to what he saith to Saul when persecuting the Church, Acts xxvi. 14. And the Apostle to the Colossians, saith, "I rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up
" that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ
" in my flesh, for his body's sake, which is the
" Church," Coloss. i. 24. The afflictions of Christ personal, were all over before that time: The things concerning him were come to an end; but much was behind of the afflictions of Christ mystical, of which the Apostle was ready to take his share with the greatest cheerfulness.

8. and lastly, All true believers shall enjoy fellowship with Christ in glory. Hence says he to the Father, "The glory which thou gavest me, I
" have given them," John xvii. 22. All the children of God are sitting with Christ in heavenly places already, as their representing Head, Eph. ii. 6. and they are all to be glorified in their own persons, together with him in due time. The Apostle Peter, in his first Epistle, chap. iv. 13. exhorts all to whom he wrote, "To rejoice in as
" much as they were partakers of Christ's suffer-
" ings,

ings, because when his glory should be revealed, "they should be glad also with exceeding joy;" and in chap. v. 1. he designs himself "a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker of the glory that should follow." And lest any should think he was speaking of the privilege of Apostles and Martyrs only, another Apostle tells us, that this honour is to all the saints, 2 Tim. iv. 8. "There is laid up for me (says he) a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

The *anointing of all Christ's fellows with the oil of gladness*, or their exaltation, is begun in this present life in their union with him; their regeneration, and their being brought to the saving knowledge of God in him. The very first saving view and discovery of God any is favoured with, is eternal life in the bud: Hence says our Lord, John xvii. 3. "This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." There is but a gradual difference betwixt grace and glory; whoever is made a *partaker of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by one Jesus Christ*. Accordingly, when the Apostle mentions the golden chain on which all spiritual blessings hang, Rom. viii. 30. he takes no notice of sanctification as a distinct blessing, but passes from justification to glorification, plainly intimating, that sanctification is included in glorification; *whom he justified, says he, them he also glorified*.

And as the glorification of believers is begun in this life, so they have an undoubted security for its being completed in the world to come. And this security they have not only from the inseparable connection that there is betwixt grace and glory, the former being the same with the latter in nature
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and quality : But glory is secured to every believer by the purchase Christ has made of it for him, by the promise of God, the intercession of Christ, and the sealing of the Holy Ghost, whereof he is made a partaker, and who is in him as the earnest of the purchased possession, and a pledge of that glory into which every believer enters, in respect of the soul, that moment he drops the clay-tabernacle, Luke xxiii. 43. The spirits of just men being made perfect at death, Heb. xii. 23. The Apostle Paul made no doubt but that as soon as he should depart this life, he should be with Christ, Philip. i. 23. And as believers are glorified, in respect of their souls, immediately upon their departure out of the body, so they shall be glorified in their whole persons at the last day, 1 Theff. iv. 16, 17, 18. In the *interim*, between the believer's death and the day of the general resurrection, his body rests in a state of union with Christ; hence said to sleep in Jesus. And his soul lives with God in the confident expectation of its re-union with the body, which shall be changed in respect of qualities, and fashioned like unto the glorious body of Christ. Now, the glorification of believers, may, with the greatest propriety, be called their *anointing with the oil of gladness*, for they shall then have all their desires satisfied to the full; yea, they shall be set beyond all doubts and fears of failing of the grace of God, and being ever separated from his love. They shall begin to reap the everlasting harvest, and be exalted above the fear of evil. Then shall the saying be accomplished, in their comfortable experience, which you have, Zeph. iii. 15. "The Lord hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out thine enemy : The King of Israel, even the LORD, is in the midst of thee; thou shalt not see evil any more." And, as has been observed already, that
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the glory of the saints is to be everlasting, will make their consolation full.

Before proceeding farther on the doctrinal part at the time, we shall deduce a few inferences for the improvement of what has been said. And,

1. We may see from what has been said, good reason to comply with our Lord's exhortation, Matth. xi. 29. *Learn of me.* Jesus Christ is not only the propitiation for our sins, but also the most excellent pattern for our imitation: Hence we are called to run our race looking unto him, Heb. ii. 2. and to walk as we have him for an example, 1 Pet. ii. 21. His example is the only unexceptionable one. We may make a profitable use of the example of the saints, but we are only to copy after it in so far as they follow Christ, 1 Cor. xi. 1. He has evidenced the most perfect love to righteousness, and hatred of wickedness, both in his private and public life, and particularly by his sufferings and death. It was in love to a holy God, and to magnify the righteous law, satisfy violated justice, destroy the works of the devil, and purify a peculiar people to himself, that he gave himself a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour. And as he hath given the most perfect evidences of his love to righteousness, and hatred of wickedness, so all who would evidence themselves to be his fellows, must do it in the way of loving righteousness, and hating iniquity also, 1 John ii. 6. "He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also to walk even as he walked." He that saith he is in Christ, and that he abideth in him, let him make this great saying good, by endeavouring daily to regulate his life and conversation according to his example, in so far as it is imitable by us.

2. We may see a good reason why the throne of our Lord Jesus is not liable to the same casualties
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and uncertainties as the thrones of earthly Princes are; their sceptres are too often managed with great injustice and manifold iniquities, which lay the foundation of their overthrow; but Zion's King rules with perfect righteousness and equity, whereby his throne is established, Psal. viii. 14. All his administrations flow from the most entire love to righteousness, and perfect hatred of iniquity; therefore shall his kingdom be for ever, and his dominion throughout all generations, and all he doth shall prosper in his hand. His horn cannot fail to bud, nor his crown to flourish.

3. We may see the dignity of all true believers; they are Christ's fellows, and therefore the excellent ones of the earth; they are the sons of God, and being sons *they are heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ*. The dignity of believers is under a vail; while they are in this world, they do not appear to be what they really are; as the world knew not Christ, neither does it know his fellows. He was despised and rejected of men, hated and persecuted; and the relation to, and fellowship with him, which believers are admitted to, frequently brings the same treatment upon them; Hence says our Lord to his Disciples, John xv. 19. "If ye were of the world, the world would love its own: But because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." When a person, or persons, perceive that the world bears them an ill-will, and are conscious to themselves of giving it no just cause to do so, they may warrantably take it as one of the evidences that they are not of the world, but chosen out of it; and should comfort themselves under present trials, in the faith's prospect of the manifestation of the sons of God.

4. We may see whence it is that some in every generation

generation are disposed to seek the honour and declarative glory of God advanced in their day, while the bulk and body of the world are minding their own things; Why, it is because they are taken into fellowship with Christ, and have, in some measure and degree, the same mind in them which was also in Christ Jesus. A mind intent upon having God glorified upon the earth. What is said of Caleb and Joshua, Josh. xxiv. 14. may justly be affirmed concerning all Christ's fellows. They have another spirit than the rest of the world; a spirit of faith in God, as their God, of love to him, and zeal and concern for the advancement of his glory. That there are so many who discover nothing of this spirit, in the age we live in, is a sad sign that there are few of Christ's fellows in it, comparatively speaking; and that there is so little of this spirit appearing among those who are really his fellows, is a lamentable evidence that the work of God is very low in their hearts.

5. From what has been said, we may infer, that believers in Christ have great cause to be thankful in every case; and whatever adversity may attend their lot in the present world, Christ has taken them into fellowship with himself. What though they have but little in hand, and be surrounded with difficulties of various kinds; their portion is sure, and *all things must work for their good*, and be means in the Lord's hand, of *making them more and more meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light*. The trials of the saints, as well as their comforts, must all tend to this end, being over-ruled and managed by an infinitely skilful and loving hand: Hence says the Apostle, speaking in name of all true believers, 2 Cor. iv. 17: "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight

“weight of glory.” Affliction does not indeed work the weight of glory for us, but it is a mean in the Lord’s hand of working us into a meetness for the enjoyment of it.

6. We may infer matter of trial and examination. There are some whom God hath called into the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ, and who have received the unction from the holy One. And it concerns every one of you to try yourselves, whether you be really among the number. And,

1. If you be among the number of Christ’s *fellows*, you have been *born again*; you are the sons of God by regeneration and adoption, and all his children bear some resemblance to their heavenly Father, in light and love. If you are his children, he has given you an heart to know him, and to love him; “and because ye are sons, he hath sent forth the spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father,” Gal. iv. 6.

2. If you are *fellow heirs with Christ*, you will have some experience of God’s special love to your souls. It is the privilege of all Christ’s fellows, to have “the love of God shed abroad in their hearts, by the Holy Ghost,” Rom. v. 5. Have you so believed and experienced the love of God to your souls then, as to be thereby *constrained to love him*? This is a never-failing effect of God’s love manifested to the heart by his Spirit: Hence says the beloved Disciple, 1 John iv. 19. “We love him, because he first loved us.” God’s love to us is the root and spring of ours to him, and to all the saints.

3. Are you among the spiritual priesthood? Have you been brought, in a day of the Mediator’s power, to *present yourselves living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God*, Rom. xii. 1. And do you daily offer the sacrifice of praise and thank-

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giving to him, by Jesus Christ, giving thanks to his name? And do you endeavour, through grace, to have the whole of your conversation in the world, so ordered as that it may prove an acceptable sacrifice unto him? in compliance with the Apostle's exhortation, Col. iv. 5, 6. "Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time. Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how to answer every man." Many profess to give their hearts to God, who dedicate their lives to Satan. But if the tree be really good, so will the fruit; and if the fruit be corrupt, it will evince the tree to be corrupt also.

4. What experience have you of conformity to Christ in his death and resurrection? Are you dead to sin, dead to the love of it, and dying daily to the practice of it? And are you endeavouring to live to the love and practice of holiness? Be not deceived, "they who are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts," Gal. v. 24. And though indwelling sin and corruption, with its affections and lusts, be not quite dead in the believer, yet it is in a dying condition, being nailed to the cross of Christ.

5. Of what nature and quality is your hope of eternal life? What is the ground and reason of it? Does it rest upon the faithful promise of God, ratified by the blood of his Son? Is it lively? Does it influence you *to purify yourselves even as God is pure*? 1 John iii. 3. Is it able to keep the soul in a state of spiritual composure, amidst outward losses, crosses, and disappointments? If these things are to be found in your case, you may consider them as hopeful evidences that your fellowship with sin and Satan is broken up, and that your fellowship is now *with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ*.

7. We

7. We may from this subject infer matter of exhortation to all of you who are yet in a state of unbelief, and so *strangers to Christ, and aliens to the commonwealth of Israel.*

And we exhort you, to lay to heart the sinfulness and misery of your present condition; you have been called, and it may be many of you often called, to come into the *fellowship of God's dear Son*, but you have hitherto refused, and thereby sinned against God, and wronged your own souls, Prov. viii. 36. You have not only wounded your souls to death by your sin in the first Adam, and your innumerable actual transgressions; but, as if all this were too little, you are taking on the additional burden of rejecting the remedy which God has graciously provided. Great is your sin, and your misery is most affecting. You are in fellowship with Satan, and joined to him as your head, Luke xv. 15. You are in *fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness*, of which you must be ashamed, sooner or later, Rom. vi. 21. We intreat you to consider, that if you live and die in your present condition, you will forever be shut out from fellowship with Christ, and have your eternal abode and fellowship with the devil and his angels. They who spend the day of light and grace in the service of Satan, must lay their account with a night of eternal darkness, horror, and confusion in his company, Matth. xxv. 41. We exhort you to consider, that you may yet be lifted up to the happiness, dignity, and honour of being among Christ's fellows. God is yet calling you to come into the *fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ*. Many have come, and yet there is room. The Father makes you welcome, the Spirit saith, *Come*; and the Son makes you welcome to fellowship with himself in grace and glory: "Behold, (says he,) I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear
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“ my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me.” Would you change the prison, the horrible pit, for the crown ; a state of the basest slavery for a glorious liberty, and choose a life of unspeakable and endless joy, rather than *everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and the glory of his power* ? then, be concerned to embrace Christ Jesus offered to you in the gospel. A gracious God is making an offer of Christ, and grace and glory with him, to every gospel hearer ; whatever they are or have done, it matters not to the rich, free, and sovereign grace of God, reigning through the all-meritorious righteousness of the Lamb that was slain. Any sinner may, yea, every sinner of mankind should lay hold on Christ by faith, as God’s *free gift* to him. Are any of you saying, Alas ! we are neither able nor willing to come into the fellowship of Christ by faith. We readily admit the truth of it ; but it is no less certain that he is both able and willing to draw you to himself : There is a sufficiency of grace in the promise to make you close with Christ : And it is written in the Prophets, *Unto him shall men come, Isa. xlv. 24. They shall flow together unto the goodness of the Lord.* Though you are by nature dead in trespasses and sins, he that is calling you to come to him *that you may have life, is the resurrection and the life.* He *quickeneth the dead, and calleth the things that be not as though they were.* Therefore look unto him, that he may draw you unto himself by the power of his Spirit and grace, and in him you shall partake of the anointing, in grace here, and in glory hereafter.

S E R M O N X.

PSAL. xlv. 7.

*Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness :
Therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with
the Oil of Gladness above thy Fellows.*

[The Second Sermon on the Text.]

HAVING discoursed a little from these words formerly, the doctrine we observed from them, was,

Doct. “ Our Lord Jesus Christ, in consequence
“ of the great and many proofs he has given of his
“ love to righteousness, and hatred of sin, both in
“ his life and by his death, is now anointed or
“ exalted by God the Father above all his fellows.”
The method proposed was,

I. To speak of that fellowship that is betwixt Christ and all true believers.

II. Discourse a little of our Lord’s exaltation, here called his being *anointed with the oil of gladness.*

III. Shew in what respects our Lord Jesus may be said to be anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows, or in other words, exalted above them.

IV. Apply.

Having gone through the first of these heads, upon a former occasion, we now proceed to the second, which is,

II. To discourse a little concerning our Lord’s exaltation, here called his being *anointed with the oil of gladness.* And in speaking to this head,

First,

First, We shall make a few remarks for paving our way, to what may be said upon this sublime and lofty point.

Secondly, Enquire in some particulars wherein our Lord's exaltation doth consist.

Thirdly, Enquire why his exaltation is called his being *anointed with the oil of gladness*; or shew whence it is that his exaltation did afford him so much gladness.

First, It was proposed to make a few remarks. And,

1. We remark, that our Lord's humiliation made no change with respect to his person. When the Son of God, or God in the person of the Son, assumed the human nature, his doing so produced a very great change in the Creature, but none at all in the Creator. When the *Word was made flesh*, he became what he was not before, but he still continued to be what he was, God equal with the Father and holy Spirit. When he is said to have *descended into the lower parts of the earth*, Eph. iv. 9. it is not so to be understood, as if the God-head or divine Person was capable of local motion from one place to another. Hence our Lord tells Nicodemus, that he was in heaven in respect of his divine nature, while he was speaking to him upon earth, John iii. 13. "No man hath ascended up into heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven." These are things, would he say, whereof no man can tell thee, but he that hath been in heaven, and no man hath been there to see them, but he that is now come down from heaven, even the Son of man that talketh with thee, and who, in respect of his Deity, is still in heaven.

2. We remark, that as our Lord's humiliation made no change in respect of his person, so neither
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has his exaltation ; Christ humbled, and Christ exalted, is still the same person. He is *the same yesterday, to-day and for ever*. Wherefore, when we speak of his being exalted, he is to be considered not as God absolutely, but as God-man Mediator. It is only as sustaining this character that he could either be humbled or exalted. For though there was a vail drawn over his divine glory by his humiliation, yet its real intrinsic excellency was no way affected thereby ; and though there is a manifestation of the divine glory in our Lord's exaltation, so as that it shines forth in its native lustre, John xvii. 5. yet it has received no addition thereby.

3. We remark, that though both the humiliation and exaltation of Christ made the change in the human nature only, yet both may be ascribed to the divine Person. In regard of the union that subsists betwixt the divine and the human nature in the person of the Son, we find the works of each nature ascribed to the whole person. The Son of God could lay down his life for us only as man, and yet he who laid down his life for us is expressly called God, 1 John iii. 16. " Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us." And another Apostle tells us, " That God purchased the Church with his own blood," Acts xx. 28. And as the Scripture ascribes the several steps of his humiliation to his person, so does it those of his exaltation ; for instance, he could only be said to ascend into heaven in respect of his human nature ; and yet, God is said to have *gone up with a shout, and the LORD with the sound of a trumpet*, Psal xlvi. 5. Though our Lord Jesus is really both God and man, he has but one person. And the proper works of each nature are to be considered as the works of the whole person.

4. We remark, that when we speak of Christ's exaltation,

exaltation, or of that glory to which he is now advanced as God-man Mediator, we are not to be understood, as if we meant that his human nature is thereby deified; for though it has received a real intrinsic glory, it still continues to be but a creature, retaining all its essential properties. Though it is lifted up to an inconceivable degree of glory at the right hand of God, it is not thereby rendered omniscient, every where present, &c. Our Lord Jesus will continue to be God and man for ever in one divine Person, each nature still retaining its own essential properties, without mixture or confusion. It is readily granted, our Lord Jesus is highly exalted, and glorified in his whole person; but as his Deity could not be exalted otherwise than by a manifestation of the same glory which he had with the Father from eternity, and which had for a while been eclipsed, so it is "impossible that humanity can become a Deity, and a creature inherit the incommunicable perfections of the Creator."

These things being observed, we now proceed to what was,

Secondly, proposed on this head, namely,

To enquire in some particulars, wherein our Lord's exaltation doth consist. And,

1. It consists in "a manifestation of the glory of his Deity in and through his humanity. As it had been obscured in the humanity, while he was humbled, so it breaks out in the humanity, when that nature is glorified, as a candle in a dark lantern doth, through the transparent crystal, when the obscuring plate is drawn aside." This is the glory which he prayed for, John xvii. 5. when he said, "Glorify me with the glory I had with thee before the world was." The Apostle to the Romans, ch. i. 4. tells us, that Christ was declared to be *the Son of God with power*, according to the Spirit of holiness
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by the resurrection from the dead. He was the Son of God from eternity; but during his abode on earth, though his eternal power and Godhead did so shine through the veil of flesh, as to be discerned by the spiritual eye, they shine forth in a far more illustrious and glorious manner in his now exalted state.

2. It consists in the raising of the human nature of Christ to an inconceivable height of glory; such a height of glory as the human nature united to a divine Person is capable of, which must be by many degrees superior to what either mere men or angels are capable to enjoy. "Our Lord's humanity was really and intrinsically glorified. There was a glory conferred on his humanity, by the grace of union with the second Person in the blessed Trinity. This was in the conception of it in the womb of the blessed Virgin. There was also a glory bestowed upon it by the communication of unmatched perfections to his soul; a fulness of the Spirit, a spotless sanctification, and an infallible knowledge of God, and of those truths he was to reveal." But now his humanity is exalted to the right hand of God, far above all heavens. At our Lord's ascension into heaven, our nature was carried up to be set with him where God represents himself in the greatest majesty to angels and glorified saints.

The humanity of Christ, consisting of soul and body, is glorified. His body is now spiritual, as opposed to infirm flesh. It is bright and full of glory. If the righteous are to shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father, Matth. xiii. 43, he who is their glorious Head, must certainly shine above the brightness of the sun. His body is no more mortal, but lives, and shall live for ever, as he declares to John, Rev. i. 18. "I am he, (saith he)

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“that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive
 “for ever more.” And as the body of Christ is
 now a glorious body, his soul is also glorified. It
 is filled with inconceivable pleasure, joy and de-
 light, every way answering his expectation, Psal.
 xvi. 11. “Thou wilt shew me the path of life; in
 “thy presence is fulness of joy, at thy right hand
 “are pleasures for evermore.” And to the same
 purpose is that of the Psalmist, when speaking of
 his glory, Psal xxi. 6. “Thou hast made him most
 “blessed for ever: Thou hast made him exceeding
 “glad with thy countenance.”

3. We may take a short view of our Lord’s ex-
 altation, as set over against his humiliation by the
 Apostle, Philip. ii. 8,—11. “He humbled him-
 “self, (saith he) and became obedient unto death,
 “even the death of the cross. Wherefore God
 “also hath highly exalted him, and given him a
 “name which is above every name; that at, *or in*
 “the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of
 “things in heaven and things on earth, and things
 “under the earth; and that every tongue should
 “confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of
 “God the Father.” We here see how perfectly
 our Lord’s exaltation answers to his humiliation.
 He humbled himself, and God hath highly exalted
 him, and that, with all exaltation, or above all ex-
 altation: Our Lord Jesus was exalted in his resur-
 rection, highly exalted in his ascension, and very
 highly exalted when he *sat down on the right hand*
of the Majesty on high. In his resurrection, he was
 exalted above the grave; in his ascension, he was
 exalted above the earth; and in his session at the
 Father’s right hand, he was made higher than the
 heavens, *exalted far above all heavens*, Eph. iv. 10.
 God the Father “hath given him a name that is
 “above every name,” that is, “he hath given him
 “dominion

“dominion and power over all creatures;” this our Lord calls *all power in heaven and in earth*, Matth. xxviii. 20. and *power over all flesh*, John xvii. 2. This power is most extensive and unlimited; it is such, that *at his name every knee*, that is, every person, *should bow*.

Things in heaven, holy angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect, bow most chearfully unto him. Things on earth; all men good and bad; the first bow to him most willingly, and the ungodly must do it. He cuts off the spirit of princes, and appears dreadful to the kings that are on earth.

Things under the earth are subject to him. Devils, and the spirits of wicked men, who are in prison, are under his control, and shall “fall under him in the great and notable day of the Lord.” In that day, *every tongue*, that is, every person *shall readily confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father*. In one word here, all things are put under his feet; and there is nothing excepted, Psal. viii. 6. “God hath given him “to be head over all things to the Church,” Eph. i. 22. Great is his glory in God’s salvation; great is the glory that redounds to him as Mediator from the work of salvation, which the Father put into his hand, and which is now finished as to purchase. And though he is now exalted above all exaltation, he is not unmindful of his fellows, who are yet upon the footstool. Hence the Apostle, after having discoursed at great length concerning his excellencies, Heb. vii. where he sets forth his greatness above all the Levitical priesthood, adds, chap. viii. 1. “Now, of the things we have spoken, this is “the sum: We have such an high Priest, who is “set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; A minister of the sanctuary,

ry, and of the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched, and not man."

4, and lastly, The exaltation of Christ consists in his being furnished in his human nature, with all these gifts and endowments of the Spirit which are suitable and necessary to the glorious condition unto which he is now raised at the Father's right hand. Hence we are told in the following context, "That all his garments smell of the precious anointing oil." When he ascended up on high, he received the promise of the Spirit, Acts ii. 33. Jesus Christ received the Spirit when he assumed our nature, he was filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb. He received the Spirit in a greater measure at his entrance upon his public ministry, Matth. iii. 16. But when he ascended up on high, he received the holy Ghost in a most plentiful measure and degree, that he might give him to all his younger brethren: Hence says the Psalmist, Psal. lxxviii. 18. "Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: Thou hast received gifts for men;" and the Apostle quoting these words, saith, "He gave gifts unto men," Eph. iv. 8. He received them with the one hand, that he might distribute them with the other. He had been giving the Spirit to the Church in all ages, but he was given in such a scanty measure and degree, before Christ was glorified, as that he is said, in a comparative view, not to have been given till then, John vii. 39. "The holy Ghost was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified." When he was glorified, the Church was to be enlarged, the kingdom of Christ set up among the Gentile nations, and the earth filled with the knowledge of God in him, as the waters cover the sea; and for these ends Christ received the Spirit upon his instalment in his kingdom, in the most plentiful and abundant

abundant manner: Hence the seven Spirits are said to be before his throne, Rev. iii. 1. And by his Spirit, he fills the earth with his knowledge; the Church with gifts for her edification; the hearts of his people with his graces and comforts, and brings all things to their remembrance, which he has spoken unto them. As Christ was sent by the Father to act for his glory, so the Spirit is sent by Christ for the manifestation of his glory, John xvi. 24. By shewing men the glory of his person, the efficacy of his obedience and death, and applying the same unto them.

Thirdly, It was proposed on this head, to enquire why our Lord's exaltation is called his being anointed with the oil of gladness; or shew whence it is that his exaltation did afford him so much gladness. And,

1. His exaltation afforded him the greatest joy and gladness, being a most infallible proof, that God the Father is well pleased with what he has done. His exaltation is a sure evidence, that the Father is glorified in the Son, and that he has the greatest complacency and delight in him as Mediator. Hence our Lord refers the Disciples to his ascension, and their receiving the Spirit, of consequence, as a sure proof that the Father is well pleased with what he has done, John xvi. 8, 10. and Daniel, in vision, had a pleasant view of the Mediator's exaltation, and the Father's hearty approbation of his work; hence says he, "I saw in the night-visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him," that is, as ambassadors used to be brought before their Princes, to give an account how they have discharged the trust committed unto them, Dan. vii. 13. And so well pleased was the God of

of peace with what his Son had done, that he gave
 “him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all
 “people, nations and languages should serve him.”

2. Our Lord’s exaltation was attended with the
 greatest joy and gladness to him, because then the
 eternal salvation of an innumerable company of
 fallen men, for whom he had an everlasting love,
 was effectually secured: And he was now to sit
 with the most consummate delight and satisfaction
 at the Father’s right hand, and see the travel of
 his soul, entering into the joy of their Lord, from
 every quarter under heaven, according to the pro-
 mise, Isa. liii. 11. He was now to have “his por-
 “tion with the great, and divide the spoil with
 “the strong, because he poured out his soul unto
 “death, and was numbered with the transgressors.”

3. Because by his exaltation, he was freed from
 all that labour, toil and sorrow to which he had
 been so eminently exposed in his humbled estate.
 From the cradle to the grave, he had been *a man
 of sorrows and acquainted with grief*, Isa. liii. 3.
 But now that he is exalted, he has fulness of joy.
 “Not only some sparks and drops, as he had now
 “and then in his debased condition, but a fulness of
 “joy, and that in the presence of his Father. His
 “soul is fed and nourished with a perpetual vision of
 “God, in whose face he beholds no more frowns,
 “no more designs of treating him as a servant; but
 “such smiles as shall give him a perpetual succession
 “of joy. He hath now joys without mixture, plea-
 “sures without number, a fulness without want,
 “a constancy without interruption, and a perpetui-
 “ty without end.” It was in consideration of these,
 and such like things, that he said to his Disciples,
 John xiv. 28. “If ye loved me, ye would rejoice
 “that I said, I go to the Father; for my Father
 “is greater than I,” viz. considered as Mediator.

Christ

Christ left this world at *Bethany*, Luke xxiv. 50, 51. which signifies *the house of sorrow*. When he left the world, he went from a house of sorrow to a house where sorrow cannot enter; and so do all his true followers.

III. The *third* head in the method, was to shew in what respects our Lord Jesus may be said to be *anointed with the oil of gladness*, or exalted *above his fellows*. And,

1. Jesus Christ is *anointed above his fellows*, in regard he is deservedly exalted to all that glory which he now possesses as Mediator, and that, whether we consider his exaltation as the proper reward of his humiliation or not.

His holy human nature, behoved, in virtue of its union with the divine, in his person, to possess a seat in glory, far superior to any creature, man or angel. If we view his exaltation as the proper reward of his humiliation, then it is deservedly conferred upon him, having most perfectly fulfilled all righteousness: Hence says he to the Father, John xvii. 4, 5. "I have glorified thee upon the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."

Whatever this glory is which our Lord prays for here, it must be a glory peculiar to him as Mediator. And he asks it, if not for, yet in consequence of that God-glorifying work which he was then just ready to finish. Being thus deservedly exalted, he is exalted *above his fellows*. For though all true believers shall be deservedly exalted, on account of what their elder Brother is to them, and has done for them; they deserve not the smallest mercy on their own account, grace and glory is the free gift of God to them through Jesus Christ our Lord.

2. He

2. He is exalted *above his fellows*, in regard his exaltation was effected by his own power. He arose from the dead by his own power, John ii. 19. And saith an Apostle, "It was not possible for him to be holden of death." For though his soul and body were separated, the one from the other, by death for a time, neither of them was, or could be separated from the divine Person. He ascended by his own power; hence saith the Psalmist, Psal. xlvii. 5. "God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet." He is *gone up*, which intimates he went up by his own power. And the Apostle to the Hebrews saith, "When he had by himself purged our sins, he sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high."

3. He is exalted *above his fellows*, in regard his human nature, in virtue of its union with his divine Person, is capable of possessing an inconceivably greater degree of glory than any of his fellows. All the vessels of glory will be full, but some will contain more than others. And who can conceive how glorious our Lord Jesus is, both in his soul and body! His humanity is glorified above the reach of any human understanding; If his countenance did shine as the sun upon mount Tabor, and his raiment was white as the light, when he was transfigured in the presence of his Disciples, even in his humbled estate, with what inconceivable lustre must his glory shine forth, upon the mountains of myrrh, and the hills of frankincense above!

4. He is exalted *above his fellows*, in regard his exaltation effectually secures theirs. He has meritoriously procured the exaltation of all his fellows by his humiliation: And when he ascended on high, the everlasting doors were cast wide open, never

to be shut again till all his fellows be brought where he is, Psal. xxiv. 7. Yea, when he was exalted, all his younger brethren were exalted with him, and in law reckoning, *they are sitting with him in heavenly places*, Eph. ii. 6. And saith another Apostle, *as he is, so are we in this world*. And in respect of that glory to which he is advanced, he is the exemplar and pattern to which all his spiritual seed are to be conformed, in so far as they are capable of likeness to him, Rom. viii. 29. "Whom he did foreknow, them he did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren." And to the same purpose is that you have Philip. iii. 21. "He shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body."

5. and lastly, Jesus Christ is exalted *above his fellows*, in as much as he is to be the eternal object of their worship and adoration. Saints and angels worship and adore him as Mediator, though their worship and homage terminates in his person, in respect of which he is the Father's equal and fellow. God in human nature, the Lamb that was slain, will be the object of the united praises of saints and angels, *world without end*, Rev. v. 9. and in this respect he is exalted *above all his fellows*. And though blasphemous Papists would have us believe that saints and angels should partake with him in this honour, we find they are so far from claiming any interest in it, (which for them to do would be the highest impiety) that on every occasion when it has been offered to them, through ignorance and mistake, they have refused to accept of it, with a becoming zeal for the glory of God, and a holy indignation against idolatry, as we see in the case of the Apostle Peter, Acts x. 26. The Apostles Paul

and Barnabas, Acts iv. 16. And of the angel whom John would have worshipped through surprise, Rev. xxii. 8, 9. "And when I had heard and seen, (says he) I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who shewed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: For I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book. Worship God."

We now proceed to make some improvement of this subject, which was the last thing proposed in the method. And,

I. We may improve this doctrine in an use of information.

(1.) Then we may see that the work of redemption, as to purchase, is a finished work. The glorious Worker is now exalted; *he is anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows*; he is entered into his rest, which shews that his work is over, Heb. iv. 10. "He that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his."

(2.) We may see that the work of redemption is highly pleasing and delightful to God. It is called *the pleasure of the Lord*, Isa. liii. 10. And he has given undoubted evidence that it is so, in the glorious advancement of Christ, to *his own right hand*, and his appointing him *the heir of all things*. The eminent station and dignity to which he is now exalted, evidences in the most convincing manner, that the sacrifice which he offered on earth, was an offering of a *sweet-smelling savour*.

(3.) We may see that the reproach and ignominy of the cross is entirely wiped away, and the human nature greatly dignified. Though our glorious Surety, was *made lower than the angels*, for a little while, he is now *crowned with glory and honour*,

nour, Heb. ii. 9. He is entered into glory with our nature, and has lifted up our flesh above the heavens, so that the reproach of the cross is removed, both from him and all his fellows in him, and none of his fellows need to be ashamed to bear it after him.

(4.) We may see with what holy boldness and confidence we may draw near to God. Our great High Priest is now passed into the heavens, having obtained eternal redemption for us; and we have access to enter with boldness into the holiest of all by his blood, in the faith of obtaining mercy, and finding grace to help us in every time of need. He is entered into heaven itself, there to appear in the presence of God for us, on the footing of the atonement he has made, and to give out all purchased blessings to men, Acts v. 31. "Him hath God exalted with his own right hand to be a Prince and Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sin."

(5.) See what ample security all true believers have for their being exalted in due time. Why, Christ is exalted, and they are already exalted in him as their Head and Representative, Eph. ii. 6. and they shall be exalted with him in their own persons; he is now *lifted up from the earth*, and *will draw them* after him. His demand shall be fully answered, John xvii. 24. "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me." Yea, if we may so speak, he will not consider his glory as complete, until he see all the travel of his soul before the throne of his glory.

(6.) Is Jesus Christ exalted? Then see how vain all the attempts of hell and earth, against his work and interest, must prove in the issue. Great

is the opposition that has been made to the kingdom of Christ ever since it was set up in the world, and that opposition will be carried on to the end of time. But "the LORD that is on high sits up-
 "on the floods. He rules in the raging of the
 "sea, and when the waves thereof swell, he stills
 "them again." He is for the present over-ruling all the opposition that is made to his work, for the good of his subjects; and it is but a little while, and he will effectually destroy every weapon that is formed against them. "He will cut off the spirit of princes, and appear terrible to the kings of the earth," P^{sa}. lxxvi. 12. Those who will not bow to him now, by embracing the sceptre of his grace and mercy by faith, shall be broken with the iron rod of his irresistible power and just indignation.

(7.) See noble encouragement to all who hear the gospel to come to Christ for all spiritual blessings. He is exalted, and one special end of his exaltation is, that he may give repentance to the impenitent, and the remission of sins to the guilty, Acts v. 31. He ascended on high blessing his Disciples, Luke xxiv. 51. to shew, that one special branch of his work within the veil, was to be the conferring of blessings upon men.

(8.) See the dreadful sin and danger that there must be in despising Christ, now that he is highly exalted. When the sin of despising him in his humbled estate, when he appeared but as a *tender plant, and a root sprung out of a dry ground*, was so very great; it must still be more highly aggravated now, because the *Son of man is now glorified*. He then spoke upon earth, but he is now speaking from heaven. And, saith the Holy Ghost, *See that ye refuse him not*. The sin of unbelief is little thought of by many who hear the gospel; they do not see the

the malignity of it, that it is an undervaluing of him whom the Father delights to honour, and that of all other sins, it has the greatest tendency to bring ruin and destruction upon the souls of men: Hence says our Lord, "He that believeth not shall be damned," Mark xvi. 16. And again he tells the Jews, John iii. 24. "If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." "You think," would he say, "ye do many things, and profess to be very zealous of the law: But, if ye believe not that I am he, viz. whom God hath sent to be the Saviour of the world, and lay claim to me by faith as your Saviour in particular, whatever else you may do, it will go for nothing, it cannot contribute in the least to found your title to eternal life; ye shall die in your sins." And as the final unbeliever must perish, so no gospel-hearer can perish, however great and many his sins and provocations may be, if he does not add the sin of final unbelief to his other offences. For *the blood of Jesus Christ, applied to by faith, cleanses the soul from all sin.* One special reason why the sin against the Holy Ghost cannot be forgiven, is, that final unbelief is an essential ingredient in it; and so they cannot be saved who reject the Saviour.

2. This doctrine may be improved in an use of trial.

Examine and try yourselves, whether you be among Christ's fellows or not. Have you received the anointing from the holy One? You have need seriously to consider, that none shall ever be anointed with the Spirit as the Spirit of glory, who are not in time anointed with him as the Spirit of grace. "They only who receive grace, and the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life eternal, by one Jesus Christ."

(1.) What experience have you of being planted in

in the likenefs of Christ's death, as the Apostle speaks, Rom. vi. 5? What conformity is there betwixt Christ and you in his death? When he died, he died unto sin, Rom. vi. 10. He got free of the burden of sin that lay upon him by imputation. Have you then been so planted in the likenefs of his death, as that you are freed from sin, in its guilt and reigning power? He that is dead is freed from sin, freed from the guilt, love and practice of it. All who are dead with Christ, hate sin, and love righteousness. And though sin still remains in their mortal bodies while here, it is not suffered to reign so as to be obeyed in the lusts of it. The man who is planted in the likenefs of Christ's death, may indeed be dragged into the service of sin, as a captive by Satan, and the remaining corruption of the heart, while, at the same time, he looks upon sin as the most abominable thing, and abhors himself on account of it.

(2.) All who shall be exalted to a state of glory with Christ, are first planted in the likenefs of his resurrection. Hence says the Apostle, Rom. vi. 5. "If we have been planted in the likenefs of his death, we shall be also in the likenefs of his resurrection." When Christ was raised from the dead, he rose to a new kind of life from what he had before; his resurrection was the beginning of his exaltation and glorification: And if you are planted in the likenefs of his resurrection, you now live in newness of life. "If you are in Christ, you are new creatures: Old things are passed away, and all things are become new," 2 Cor. v. 17. After our Lord Jesus arose from the dead, he confined his company and converse to his own Disciples and followers. And if you are planted in the likenefs of his resurrection, you love the company and conversation of the godly, and so far as circumstances

stances will permit, you decline the society of the wicked. When Christ arose from the dead, his heart and affections were intent upon being with his Father; and if you be risen with him, your affections are set upon those things where he is, Col. iii. 1, 2. If you be risen with Christ, as all your treasure is in heaven, and all your spiritual kindred, your Father, your Saviour, your Husband, and many of your fellow brethren, your hearts cannot fail to be there also, and your conversation will favour of heaven and divine things. It is no strange thing to hear men have all their conversation about the earth, who have all their expectation from it; nor should it be thought at all surprising to hear men have at least a considerable part of their conversation in heaven, and about heavenly things, who have all their desire and expectation from heaven. But it is truly amazing to see many entertaining a fond hope of landing in heaven at last, whose conversation by the way, has nothing in it that savours of Christ and divine things.

(3.) If you really expect, yea, if you in earnest desire to be where Christ is, you are much concerned about being *made meet* for the glory that is to be revealed. You know, and are persuaded, that without *holiness* you cannot see the Lord, Heb. xii. 14. And as you are convinced you cannot prepare yourselves for glory, so you have your sole dependence upon your exalted Head, for meetness "to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light," while you are, at the same time, concerned to make a diligent improvement of the means of divine appointment, for promoting your likeness to Christ. As the hope of glory never fails to excite those in whom it is, to press after holiness, 1 John iii. 9. "Every man who hath this hope in him, purifieth himself even as he is pure." So
it

it is not upon ordinances and duties you depend, or from them you expect meetness to *inherit the purchased possession*, but from the powerful efficacy of the divine Spirit, in the use and improvement of duties and ordinances.

(4.) Does the prospect of your being anointed with *the oil of gladness* in due time, support and comfort your hearts under present discouragements? When the believer gets a faith's view of the glory that is to be revealed, he is comforted under his heaviest trials, Psal. xxvii. 13. And in another Psalm, after the Psalmist had complained of, and prayed against, the wrath of his enemies, he comforts himself in the faith of getting free of them altogether in due time; says he, "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness." The believing prospect which the great Head entertained of his being *anointed with the oil of gladness*, was not a little comforting to him under his heaviest sufferings, Heb. xii. 3. And if you are really among his fellows, the believing views of the King in his beauty, and the land that is afar off, with which you are sometimes favoured, afford you joy even in tribulation.

Finally, All Christ's fellows; all true believers dearly love him. In whatever light he may appear to others, to them he is precious. They admire his person, and his beauty is incomparable in their esteem. They admire his love, and put the highest value on his righteousness. They rejoice in the advancement of his honour, and delight to see the crown of Mediatorial glory flourish upon his head, both in the conversion of sinners, and the upbuilding of the saints. They think much upon him, and have an habitual desire after being like him,

him, and with him where he is, that they may behold his glory.

3. The *last* use of the doctrine may be in a word of exhortation,

First, To believers in Christ; and, *secondly*, to those who are yet his enemies. As to you who are believers,

(1.) We exhort you to bless God for Christ, *who was delivered for your offences, and raised again for your justification.* We exhort you to run your

race, looking to your once humbled, but now exalted Prince and Saviour.

Consider him, lest

“you be weary and faint in your minds,” Heb. xii.

2, 3. The believing contemplation of Christ as now exalted, is a solid antidote against your being weary or fainting in your minds, amidst the trials of a present world.

(2.) Rejoice that Christ is now *anointed with the oil of gladness.* His exaltation is matter of great

joy to all his fellows, as he intimates to his Disciples, John xiv. 28. “If ye loved me, (says he) ye

“would rejoice because I said, I go to the Father.”

It is matter of great joy, that he is gone to the Father, both on his own account and theirs. On

his own account, because all his sorrows are now swallowed up of joy; and on their account, because

he is gone to heaven on their business, and as their Fore-runner. He is gone to prepare a place for

them, and to prepare them for the enjoyment of it, by his Spirit.

(3.) We exhort you, while you are at home in the body, and so absent from the Lord, carefully

to keep up the correspondence which he settled betwixt him and all his fellows before he left this

world, in respect of his bodily presence, John xiv.

13. “Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my

name,

"name, (says he) that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." He had been telling his Disciples a little before, that one of them would betray him, another deny him, and that all of them would forsake him; and with all, that he was soon to go to heaven, and leave them behind him; and these things filled their hearts with sorrow, when they thought upon them. Well, what course does he take for their comfort? He tells them, that he was to send the Spirit as their Guide and Comforter, and to be in them as a Spirit of grace and supplication, enabling them to ask whatever they should need to carry them through duty and difficulty; assuring them, at the same time, that he would give it unto them. As if he had said, "I am going to leave you as to my bodily presence, but before I do so, I now settle a correspondence betwixt me and you: Be sure to let me hear from you as occasion requires, and you shall ever find me ready to answer your demands; and further, let it encourage you to ask freely and largely, that I assure you, the more you ask, and the more I give you, the more will the Father be glorified in the Son." Now, it is by the prayer of faith, that this correspondence is both begun and kept up, between Christ and the believer.

(4.) Be exhorted to act faithfully for Christ in your day and generation, place and station in the world. Be not ashamed of him whom God hath exalted to be both Lord and Christ. You have no cause to be ashamed of him, or of any person or thing belonging to him. It is your greatest honour to own and cleave to him in an open and avowed acknowledgment of all his truths, ordinances and institutions, in this day of rebuke, and treading down in the valley of vision. And though you may lay your account with trials, if you would be faithful

faithful to him, you may expect his presence with you in them, Isa. xliii. 2. ; so that the floods of great waters swelling to the brim, shall not overwhelm your souls, nor shall the flame kindle upon you.

Finally, We exhort you to look forward, and press on through all opposing difficulties, "toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Lift up your heads, and look out for the day of your compleat redemption, when *all tears shall be wiped away from your eyes, and everlasting joy shall be upon your heads,* Isa. xxxv.

10. It is but a little while, and *he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry,* and then in the most faithful and loving manner, he will make good his promise to all his fellows; John xiv. 3. "I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also." And when this promise has once received its accomplishment, "your sun shall go no more down, nor your moon withdraw her shining; for the Lord shall be your everlasting light, and your God your glory, and the days of your mourning shall be ended."

2. We exhort you, who are yet in a natural state and condition, to lay to heart the sin you stand chargeable with, the misery you are under, and the wrath to which you are exposed. You have sinned in your first father Adam; the guilt of Adam's first sin, the want of that original righteousness which you received in him, with the corruption and depravation of your whole nature, renders you obnoxious to the wrath and curse of God, even previous to your being capable to sin in an active way and manner; and you have added many actual transgressions to your original sin and guilt. We exhort you to come to Christ for the pardon and forgiveness of your sin original and actual. God hath raised him from

from the dead, and given him glory that your faith and hope might be in God. Our once humbled, but now exalted Saviour, has made a purchase of all spiritual blessings, and with himself he exhibits them all freely to mankind sinners in the gospel, without exception of any. A God of grace is saying to all who hear the gospel, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat, yea, come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price," Isa. lv. 1. Oh! do not then stand all the day idle in the market-place, while you may have God's unspeakable Gift, and grace and glory with him, not only without money, but even without price. Many a bargain is proposed among men, that is never concluded, because the buyer will not come up to the seller's terms; but it is otherwise in the gospel-market: Many lose a good bargain because they will not submit to take all freely. We intreat you to consider that it is not left optional to you, to receive Christ as your Saviour or not. It is God's command to you, "That ye believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ," 1 John iii. 23. Your refusing to embrace him as your Prophet, Priest and King, is a trampling the highest authority under your feet, Psal. ii. 12. It is a contemning the greatest goodness, and doing the highest injury to your own souls, as you must be forever miserable without Christ, there being "no other name given under heaven among men, whereby ye can be saved, but the name of Jesus." Consider that he is both able and willing to save you, whatever you have been or done. There is an infinite value and efficacy in his blood, to cleanse you from all sin: And as the *blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from all sin*, so he stands ready in the dispensation of the gospel, to apply it for that

that purpose by his Spirit. And it is his pleasant work to do it: Hence says he, Ezek. xxxvi. 25. "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you." In one word, consider that if you are not brought to submit to be *washed* by him, you can have *no part with him*; no fellowship with him in grace here, nor any communion with him in glory hereafter: While he is yet saying to you then, "Look unto me, and be ye saved," pray for the spiritual eye to behold him, and the hand of faith to embrace him, as *made of God to you, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption*; and so shall your fellowship be with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ, in grace here, and in glory forever, hereafter.

S E R M O N XI.

The Garments of CHRIST, our New Testament High Priest, sending forth a sweet savour from his Ivory Palaces.

PSAL. xlv. 8.

All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made thee glad.

IN the preceding context we are told, that God the Father hath anointed God the Son, as Mediator, *with the oil of gladness above his fellows*; and in this verse the effect of that anointing is declared:

clared: *All his garments smell of myrrh, &c.* The commendation here given to the garments of our New Testament High Priest, is what all the family of God readily agree in; for to every one of them he is precious. The speaker is the same here as in the preceding verse, namely, JEHOVAH in the person of the Father, or the royal Psalmist in his name: And the person to whom he speaks is likewise the same, viz. JESUS CHRIST, the glorious Bridegroom of the Church. The text contains in general, a commendation of his garments: "All thy garments *smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia*, out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made thee glad." Where, more particularly, we may observe,

1. The subject spoken of, viz. the garments of our once humbled, and now highly exalted Redeemer. What we are to understand by Christ's garments we may afterward enquire, only it seems obvious that there is here an allusion to the garments of the High Priest under the law, concerning which the Lord saith to Moses, *Exod. xxviii.* 2. "Thou shalt make holy garments for Aaron thy brother, for glory and for beauty." John the beloved Disciple, evidently alludes to these garments in that lofty description which he gives us of Christ when he saw him in vision, *Rev. i.* 12, 13. "I saw, (says he) in the midst of the seven candlesticks, one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle."

2. We have these garments commended; they have a most sweet and fragrant smell. They savour of the anointing. *All thy garments smell of myrrh, &c.* There is here again a reference to the anointing oil, wherewith Aaron, his sons, the tabernacle, and the vessels belonging thereto, were consecrated,

consecrated, Exod. xxix. 7. Lev. viii. 12. The composition of this sacred ointment you read of Exod. xxx. 23. and myrrh and cassia were chief ingredients in it. This holy oil signified the Spirit of God, and anointing therewith the communication of the Spirit, in his saving graces, divine joys and consolations, Isa. lxi. 1. The anointing of Jesus Christ with the Spirit beyond measure, John iii. 34. is called the resting of the Spirit upon him, Isa. xi. 2. With this oil our Lord Jesus was anointed above his fellows, in his conception, at his baptism, and in an eminent manner upon his exaltation to the Father's right hand, when he received the promise of the Spirit, to give him to the Church.

3. We may observe from whence it is that these garments send forth their sweet and soul-refreshing flavour, it is from the *ivory palaces*, namely, heaven. Heaven is the palace of the King, the *house not made with hands*; a palace consisting of *many mansions*, John xiv. 2. It is here compared to palaces of ivory, being durable and lasting, rich and beautiful, and inconceivably far exceeding the magnificence and splendor of the most finished earthly palaces. Great men have had their houses, or at least part of them, of ivory, for glory and for beauty, 1 Kings xxii. 39. Amos iii. 15. And it hath pleased the Spirit of God, to set forth the glory of the heavenly rest by references to such things as great men look upon to be most expressive of majesty, glory, and beauty. But, what that glory which is within the vail really is, the day will best declare. How inconceivably great must the glory of the palace be, when all the subjects "shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father, and when the streets of the city are of pure gold!"

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4. We may observe the effect of the sweet smell of these garments upon Christ himself, it *makes him glad*. "All thy garments *smell* of myrrh, and "aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces, where "by they have made thee glad." By those who are here said to have made Christ glad, some understand the Father and holy Spirit, he having been by them fitted for his mediatory work, and gloriously rewarded when the work of redemption, as to purchase, was finished. But as the words stand in our version, it would seem it is by the garments wherewith our High Priest is clothed, that he is made glad. They smell of the anointing, and thereby he is made glad. He is now in possession of that joy that was set before him; he is now *crowned with glory and honour*, and entrusted with the outgiving of all the sweet and savoury blessings, which he once had the burden of purchasing. And though his soul was once in travel, yet now that he is made perfect through sufferings, and is become the Author of eternal salvation to an innumerable company of fallen men: He is exceeding glad; he beholds with the greatest pleasure *the travel of his soul and is satisfied*. Our Lord Jesus has received the Spirit, and all power in heaven and earth, whereby he is in case to save to the very uttermost, all who come unto God by him, and therefore he is glad. But more agreeably to the original, the words may be read thus, "All thy garments smell of myrrh, "and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces, "above theirs who have made thee glad." That is, above the garments of his fellows, who make him glad, *viz. in the day of their espousals with him*, which is called *the day of the gladness of his heart*. So much is Christ set upon saving work, that a sinner's being brought to set the crown of his salvation on his head, affords him real joy and gladness: Hence

Hence is that call to embrace him by faith, Cant. iii. 11. "Go forth, O daughters of Zion, and behold King Solomon, with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him, in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart." The general doctrine of the text is,

Doct. *That Jesus Christ, our once humbled, and now exalted Saviour, is incomparably sweet and savoury to all spiritual discerners.*

The method we shall observe, in speaking from these words, as the Lord may enable, is,

I. To mention some things which we take to be implied in the text.

II. Give some account of the garments of our exalted High Priest, which are here commended for their savoury smell.

III. Illustrate the truth of the doctrine; or shew, that Jesus Christ, our once humbled, and now exalted Saviour, is incomparably sweet and savoury to all spiritual discerners.

IV. Apply.

I. The *first* thing proposed, was to mention some things which we take to be imported in the text. And,

1. We think these words imply, that it is most pleasant and delightful exercise and employment for the people of God, to contemplate the glory and excellency of Christ; the glory of his person, and the unsearchable riches of grace, and gracious influences of the Spirit, which are treasured up in him. Great was the pleasure and satisfaction which the Psalmist found in this exercise, as we see particularly in this psalm. And in another psalm he tells us, that the *one thing* he desired of the Lord, a-

bove every thing else, was, *that he might behold the beauty of the Lord, and enquire in his temple.* To meditate much upon the person, glory, and excellency of Christ, tends greatly to strengthen the soul, warm the heart with love to a three-one God, fill us with hatred at sin, and transform the whole man into likeness and conformity to him. Hence saith the Apostle, when recording his own, and the experience of all true believers, with respect to this exercise, 2 Cor. iii. 18. “ We all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.”

2. The words imply, that the more closely and particularly that we consider Christ, *the Apostle and High Priest of our profession*, the more will we find in him, to draw out our affections to him, and heighten our esteem and commendations of him, and of every thing belonging to him, even to his garments. This was the case with the Psalmist here; and when the Spouse falls a commending him to the daughters of Jerusalem, Cant. v. 10. she finds the grounds of commendation and praise, to grow and increase so much upon her hand, that she breaks off in an abrupt manner, pronouncing him *altogether lovely*, “ His mouth (says she) is most sweet, yea, he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.”

3. The words imply, that as believers have spiritual senses, whereby they savour the things that be of God, so it is their privilege at some seasons to be admitted to such special nearness to Christ, as that they can sinell his garments. All the spiritual Israel are *a people near to God*, Psal. cxlviii. 14. They are a people brought near to him by the blood of

of Jesus, Eph. ii. 13. But there are some seasons wherein they are, in a special manner, brought into the presence-chambers, such as, in the day of conversion, the day of renewed manifestation; before, and when under heavy trials for his name's sake; after a dark night of desertion; when they are led out, under the influences of the Spirit, to be much in prayer and spiritual meditation, &c. Then are they often in case, in an eminent manner, to join with the Spouse, in saying, to the praise of free grace, and the comfort of their own souls, "He brought me into the banqueting-house, and his banner over me was love," Cant. ii. 4. Then do they experience the sweet smell of his garments, and the savour of his good ointments diffuses itself through every power and faculty of their souls.

4. The words imply, that faith sees not only a fulness in Christ that is inexhaustible, but also a pleasant variety of spiritual blessings, every way suited to the various wants and necessities of the soul. The anointing oil was composed of various ingredients, to point out the great variety of blessings which Christ hath to communicate to his Church and people by his Spirit. Many in their number, and precious in their nature, are the fruits which grow upon the *tree of life, that is in the midst of the paradise of God*; and they are most wonderfully adapted to the several exigencies of all who are brought forward under the powerful influences of the Spirit, to make a believing improvement of them. There is pardon to the guilty, eye-salve for the blind, sanctification for the filthy, health for the diseased; the *leaves of the tree of life are for the healing of the nations*. And as there is a fulness in Christ that cannot be exhausted, and a variety suiting every case, so he has

a liberal heart, and an open hand, to give both grace and glory, Psal. lxxxiv. 11. "The Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord will give grace and glory: No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." Yea, one special end of his entering into the ivory palaces, is, that he may give repentance unto men, and the remission of sins.

5. The words imply, that Christ is not only suited to the case of believers, but also to their very wish and desire. He perfectly fills the hand and heart of faith, and no other object can do it: Hence saith the Psalmist, Psal. lxxiii. 25. "Whom have I in heaven but thee? there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee." This is the language of every true believer. Our Lord Jesus is most perfectly suited to the condition of every sinner of mankind; but until the spiritual eye be formed, the sinner can see no beauty in him why he is to be desired. The believer only is in case to say, "All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces;" and the reason is, he has his senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

Finally, The words imply, that the conversion of sinners is matter of joy and gladness to the Saviour. "All thy garments smell of myrrh," &c. more than theirs who have made thee glad. When a poor sinner is brought to consent to be espoused to Christ, it makes glad the heart of the Saviour; in that hour Jesus rejoices in spirit, for *he sees the travel of his soul, and is satisfied*, Isa. liii. 11. And is not this, among many others, a sweet inducement for sinners, who are ready to perish, to comply with the exhortation? "Go forth, O daughters of Zion, and behold King Solomon, with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him, in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness

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"of his heart." Is Christ made glad when a sinner submits to his righteousness, and when he consents to be saved from sin, and the wrath to come by him? and shall the sinner refuse to give him glory by believing, when the benefit which is unspeakable, is all to be his own, and when, if he scorns and rejects the grace of God exhibited in the gospel, he alone must bear it?

II. The *second* thing in the method was to give some account of the garments of our exalted High Priest, which are here commended for their savoury smell: And we have already observed, that there is here an evident allusion to the garments of the high Priest under the law; they were made for glory and for beauty. They were of diverse colours, and curiously wrought, being intended to shadow forth a far more glorious clothing, namely, that perfect and law-magnifying righteousness, which our great gospel High Priest has wrought out as the Head and Surety of an elect world, and which is inherent in him, and imputed by God the Father, to all who believe on his name.

We have a particular enumeration of the priestly garments, Lev. viii. 7, 8, 9. where Moses is commanded to put them upon Aaron in the presence of all the congregation of Israel; "And he put upon him the coat, and girded him with the girdle of the ephod, and bound it unto him there-with. And he put the breast-plate upon him: also he put in the breast-plate, the Urim and Thummim. And he put the mitre upon his head, even upon his forefront did he put the golden plate, the holy crown; as the Lord commanded Moses." According to this account of the high Priest's garments, we may observe,

1. That he had a coat of fine linen. It is called *the embroidered coat*, Exod. xxviii. 39. It was not
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of plain linen, such as the rest of the Priests did wear, but of linen curiously wrought. It was a long linen garment, reaching down to the feet of the high Priest.

This garment seems evidently to have signified the righteousness of Christ, consisting in the holiness of his human nature, the perfect conformity of his life to the law-precept, and his satisfactory sufferings and death, whereby he has paid the penalty that we incurred by our breach of covenant in the first Adam. When John had a vision of Christ, as the great High Priest of the Church, he appeared to him in a garment down to the foot, Rev. i. 13. "And in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, (says he) I saw one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle." This long garment is that robe of wrought gold, "that fine linen, clean and white, which is the righteousness of saints," Rev. xix. 8. Not the righteousness which the saints have wrought out, but the righteousness of Christ in which they are arrayed, and in which they stand with acceptance before the throne of God.

2. Another piece of the High Priest's clothing was his girdle, "He put upon him the coat, and girded him with the girdle." This girdle was made of "fine twined linen, and blue, and purple, and scarlet," all needle-work, Exod. xxxix. 29. Now, we find our great gospel High Priest appearing to John, "girt about the paps with a golden girdle," Rev. i. 13. And Christians are called to have their *loins girt about with truth*, Eph. vi. 14.

We may consider the girdle of the High Priest then, as shadowing forth the truth and faithfulness of Christ; concerning him it is said, "righteousness"

"ness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins," Isa. xi. 5. It might likewise denote his strength, as the girdle strengthens the loins, Prov. xxxi. 17. "She girded her loins with strength." Our Lord Jesus is a strong One, chosen from among the folk. Mighty to save, strong is his hand, and high is his right hand. Moreover, as the girdle imports readiness for action and service, as we see in the case of Elijah, 1 Kings xviii. 46. ; where we are told, "that the hand of the Lord was upon him; and he girded up his loins, and ran before Ahab, to the entrance of Jezreel." He girded up his long garment, that it might not incumber him by the way. So the girdle of the high Priest pointed forth how ready our Lord Jesus is for his work. His girdle is never loosed, for *he slumbers not nor sleeps*. He is in continual readiness to promote the glory of God, and the good of his Church and people.

3. The high Priest was ornamented with a robe, called *the robe of the ephod*, Exod. xxviii. 31. This robe was made all of blue; it was not so long as the embroidered coat, of which before; it reached only to the knees, having a strong binding or lip about the neck of it, that it might not be rent, Exod. xxviii. 32. What was most observable about this piece of the high Priest's garments, was the golden bells and pomegranates which were upon the border of it, of which you read, Exod. xxviii. 33, 34.

These sacred bells, which hung upon the hem of the high Priest's robe, that his sound might be heard when he went into the holy place, before the Lord, were a lively representation of Christ's voice in the gospel, and of his intercession at the Father's right hand; he is the great Speaker in the Church,

Church, and he ever liveth to make intercession for us. The curious works upon the border of the garments of the high Priest, resembling the fruit we call the *pomegranate*, which is sweet and delicious to the taste, and fragrant and delightful to the smell, were designed to represent and shadow forth the sweet and precious effects both of the gospel of Christ, and his prevalent intercession within the veil. The gospel is not only a joyful sound, but it hath also a sweet and savoury smell, whereby the hearts of men are refreshed, 2 Cor. ii. 15. When it is faithfully preached, and believably received, it produces *all manner of pleasant fruits*, Cant. vii. 13. "The mandrakes give a smell, and at our gates are all manner of pleasant fruits, new and old, which I have laid up for thee, O my Beloved."

4. The high Priest had an ephod which was in the form of a short coat, put upon his garments to keep them together. And he put the ephod upon him, Lev. viii. 7. There were two sorts of ephods in use among the Jews; that which was peculiar to the high Priest, was made of gold, blue, purple, scarlet and fine twined linen, Exod. xxviii. 6. There were two shoulder-pieces belonging to the high Priest's ephod, in which were placed two ouches of gold, with two onyx-stones set and fastened in them, like diamonds in a ring. The use of these stones was for the writing of the names of the twelve Tribes of the children of Israel in them, that the high Priest might *bear them on his shoulders for a memorial before the LORD*, Exod. xxviii. 12. Now the high Priest, his bearing the names of the children of Israel in the shoulder-pieces of the ephod, represented our great gospel High Priest, supporting his Church and people, bearing them and all their burdens, as it were upon his shoulders,

shoulders, according to that prediction, Isa. ix. 6. *The government, or the burden, shall be upon his shoulders.* And as he bears his Church and people on his shoulders, so he presents them to the LORD to be in *everlasting remembrance before him*, so that he cannot look upon their high Priest, but their names appear upon his shoulders; for a memorial before him, the shoulder-pieces of the ephod of our great gospel High Priest then, are ever before the LORD, as a book of remembrance for them who fear him, and that think upon his name.

5. Another part of the high Priest's clothing, was the *breast-plate*. "And he put the breast-plate upon him," Lev. viii. 8. The breast-plate was four-square, a span in breadth, and a span in length, Exod. xxviii. 16. The materials of which it was framed, were the same with these of the ephod, Exod. xxviii. 15. And there were twelve stones set in the breast-plate, containing the names of the twelve Tribes of Israel, Exod. xxviii. 17,—22. with the *Urim* and *Thummim*, concerning which it is said, that Moses "put in the breast-plate, the *Urim* and *Thummim*," Lev. viii. 8. The use of the *Urim* and *Thummim* was to enquire of God thereby: Hence the breast-plate wherein they were set, is called *the breast-plate of judgment*, Exod. xxviii. 15,—30. The *Urim* and *Thummim* were not things prepared by the work-men, as the rest of the holy garments were; but immediately given to Moses by God himself; for we have no account in Scripture, either of the making of them, or of what materials they were made, but only that the Lord gave them unto Moses, and that he put them into the breast-plate.

There was much of the gospel represented by the breast-plate of the high Priest, and the things belonging thereto. The precious stones, with the

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names of the twelve Tribes of Israel, did signify all the saints ; the whole Church of the *first-born*, whose names are written in heaven ; and these stones being set in the breast-plate, intimates, that our New Testament High Priest has all the spiritual Israel near his heart ; they rest on the bosom of his warmest love, and affection being set as “ a seal up-
 “ on his heart, and as a seal upon his arm,” as the Spouse speaks, Cant. viii. 6. “ Set me as a seal up-
 “ on thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm, for love
 “ is strong as death, jealousy is cruel as the grave.” And whereas the breast-plate was fastened to the shoulder-pieces of the ephod, it was to intimate, that the love and power of Christ, are inseparably engaged in the business of our salvation ; they go hand in hand therein.

The use of the Urim and Thummim, was for consultation in dark and difficult cases, Num. xxvii. 21. 1 Kings xxiii. 9. We cannot certainly say, after what manner the Lord answered the high Priest, when he enquired of him concerning any thing by Urim and Thummim, though it is most likely he did so sometimes by an audible voice from the Mercy-seat, and at other times, by immediate inspirations and illuminations upon his mind, giving him a clear and distinct knowledge of the things about which he was enquiring, and what was his will and pleasure concerning them. The words *Urim* and *Thummim* signify *lights* and *perfections* ; and they were evidently intended as a shadow of that fulness of divine light and perfections that dwells in Jesus Christ, *in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*. He is the *Messenger of the Covenant*, and the unerring Interpreter of its secrets.

6. The high Priest had a fair mitre for his head made of fine linen, Exod. xxviii. 39. This was one of the costly garments that was put on, as we

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see in the case of Joshua, Zech. iii. 5. "And I said, let them set a fair mitre upon his head." The mitre was the same on the matter, with what we call a bonnet or hat; it was appointed for the high Priest, both for ornament, and to be a sign of illustrious sacred majesty, and superiority over the rest of the priests. The word rendered *mitre*, Exod. xxviii. 39. is rendered a *diadem* or *crown*, Ezek. xxi. 26. and Job xxix. 14. This mitre or crown then, points us to the princely dignity and kingly power of our Lord Jesus Christ.

He is such a great High Priest, as that *he is a Priest upon his throne*, Zech. vi. 13. "He shall sit and rule upon his throne, and he shall be a Priest upon his throne, and the counsel of peace shall be between them both." All true believers are a royal priest-hood, 1 Pet. ii. 9, but on the throne he is higher than they. He who is our Saviour, *is the great God*, and considered as Mediator, he has *all power in heaven and in earth* lodged in his hand, that he may *give eternal life to as many as God hath given him*.

7. The high Priest had a golden plate above the mitre, with this inscription upon it, HOLINESS TO THE LORD, or the *holiness of the Lord*. Hence the Lord saith to Moses, Exod. xxviii. 36. "Thou shalt make a plate of pure gold, and grave upon it like the gravings of a signet, HOLINESS TO THE LORD." When we consult the two following verses, we see this piece of priestly attire, directing us to behold the absolute perfection, and spotless holiness of our gospel High Priest, and his bearing away the iniquity of our holy things, and procuring our access to, and acceptance with God, notwithstanding our daily failings and shortcomings. *We are made accepted in the beloved*, Eph. i. 6. who sits at the right hand of God, in the character of
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of the Lord our righteousness. For a more full account of these things, the reader may consult *Mathew on the Types*, whence I have borrowed several things in this sermon, and particularly upon this head.

8. and *lastly*, Our Lord Jesus is set forth in Scripture as clothed in a suitableness to the various branches of the work he is employed in, whether of mercy to his people, or of judgment towards his enemies. Accordingly, being about to reform his Church, comfort his people, and chastise his enemies, Isa. lix. 17. He is said to have "put on righteousness as a breast-plate, an helmet of salvation upon his head; the garments of vengeance, and to have clothed himself with zeal, as a cloak." He appeared to the Prophet Isaiah *red in his apparel*, Isa. lxiii. 2. And to John in the vision he had of him, spreading death and destruction among the enemies of his Church and people, Rev. xix. 15. He appeared in a *vesture dipt in blood*, as being expressive of the nature of the work he was engaged in. So much for a brief account of the savoury garments of our New Testament High Priest. And we may now shut up this head with the words of the Apostle to the Hebrews, chap. viii. 1, 2. "Now of the things which we have spoken, this is the sum: We have such an High Priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a Minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the LORD pitched, and not man."

III. The *third* thing in the method was, to illustrate the truth of the doctrine, or shew, that Jesus Christ, our once humbled, and now exalted Saviour, is incomparably sweet and savoury to all spiritual discerners. And,

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1. He is sweet and savoury to God the Father ; he is his *well beloved Son*, his *elect*, in whom his *soul delighteth*, Isa. xlii. 1. Jesus Christ is sweet and savoury to the Father, not only as he is his eternal bosom delight, but also considered as Mediator ; *he is pleased*, yea more than pleased, for his *righteousness sake*, whereby the holy law is not only fulfilled, but *magnified and made honourable*, Isa. xlii. 21. He smells a sweet savour in the sacrifice he has offered in the law-room and place of guilty sinners, Eph. v. ii. " Christ also hath loved us, " (saith the Apostle) and hath given himself for us, " an offering, and a sacrifice to God, for a sweet " smelling savour ; " or for a savour of rest. " It " pleased the Lord to bruise him," saith the Prophet, Isa. liii. 10. He had no pleasure in the bruising act itself, but in the sweet savour arising from a broken and a bruised Christ. Many are the ways by which God hath evidenced that Christ, in what he hath done and suffered, is most sweet and savoury to him ; and particularly, he is doing so, by his not with-holding from him whatever he is pleased to ask, upon the footing of what he has done and suffered.

Our New Testament High Priest is savoury to all true believers, to them *he is precious*, 1 Pet. ii. 7. There is a fragrancy in his name to them, like to the *ointment poured forth*, Cant. i. 3. Believers experience a fragrant smell from the righteousness of Christ ; it smells of peace and pardon to them. They experience an incomparable sweetness in the gospel of Christ, in respect of which *his lips like lilies drop sweet smelling myrrh* upon them, Cant. v. 13. There is an unspeakable sweetness to them in all his saving offices, and in all his names, characters, and relations. In one word, " All his garments smell of myrrh, aloes, and cassia, " out

“out of the ivory palaces, above theirs who are
 “his fellows.” Our glorious High Priest is the
 darling of the whole family of God ; hence called
the Beloved, Eph. i. 6. The beloved of the Fa-
 ther, the beloved of angels, and of saints.

IV. We now proceed to make some improve-
 ment of the subject, which was the last thing pro-
 posed in the method. And,

The *first* use may be of information, in a few
 particulars.

1. Hence see, that our Lord Jesus Christ is a
 lovely object, in himself considered, however few
 should be taken up with his person and righteous-
 ness, and the saving blessings of his purchase: If
 the favour of the best ointments is not found in
 him, it is not because it is wanting in him, but be-
 cause the spiritual smell is not to be found with us,
 for “All his garments smell of myrrh, and aloes,
 “and cassia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby he
 “is made glad.”

2. Hence see, that believers are men of another
 taste and smell than the rest of the world. The
 natural man sees no beauty and excellency in Christ
 why he should desire him, Isa. liii. 2. But the be-
 liever has the spiritual faculty, whereby he savours
 the things that be of God : Hence says our Lord
 to his Bride and Spouse, Cant. vii. 4. “Thy nose
 “is like the tower of Lebanon, that looketh to-
 “ward Damascus” That is, thou art endowed
 with spiritual wisdom and discerning, whereby
 thou art in case to smell out, and approve of that
 which is excellent.

3. We may see whence it is that the garments
 of believers are said to smell as Lebanon, Cant. iv.
 11. “Honey and milk (says Christ to the Spouse)
 “are under thy tongue, and the smell of thy gar-
 “ments is like the smell of Lebanon.” Why, the
 reason

reason is, they have been brought to smell Christ's garments, and the smell of them has gone about their hearts : They are savingly united to his person, and the precious anointing oil that was poured upon his head, has been made to drop upon them. They have received the unction from him, their holy One, and this makes their talk and walk sweet and savoury. Their exalted High Priest is as the dew to their souls, in the gracious influences of his Spirit, and therefore their branches spread, and their beauty is as the olive-tree, and their smell as Lebanon.

Finally, Is Christ so sweet and savoury ? Is there every thing in him to attract and draw sinners to believe in him, love and esteem him above all other persons and things ? then we may see matter of lamentation, that so few are disposed to adopt the language of the text, " All thy garments smell of " myrrh," &c. Gospel Ministers have much reason to take up the old complaint, Isa. liii. 1. " Who " hath believed our report ? and to whom hath " the arm of the Lord been revealed ? " Multitudes give sad evidences that the things of a present world smell more sweetly with them, than Christ and divine things. The white and yellow dust of the earth smell more sweetly with the covetous man, than Christ. A little worldly pomp and splendour, savours more with the vain, proud, ambitious man, than God's Anointed. And the far greater part of the young generation among us, are more taken up with the vain sinful fashions of the world, than with Christ ; alas ! how wofully is he slighted and despised in all his offices ? the wise in their own conceit despise him as a Prophet, self-justiciaries despise him as a Priest, and self-willed, proud, and haughty scorers, condemn his kingly authority.

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The *second* use of the doctrine may be for trial and examination. Are you in case to adopt the language of the text? Have you experienced the truth contained in it? "All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces." If so,

1. You have been endowed with the spiritual smell. The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; he does not savour them, because he has not his senses exercised to discern them. Were you ever born again, and renewed in the spirit of your minds? Rom. xii. 2. Are your old things passed away, and are all things in part become new with you? It is only in the nostrils of the new creature, that the garments of Christ have a fragrant smell.

2. Have you seen our glorious High Priest, in his person, righteousness, offices and fulness, as suited, not only to your case, but also to your wish and desire? There is not a sinner of mankind out of hell, but Christ is exactly suited to his case; but he is suited to the wish only of the true believer. Though there may be something in Christ that other men profess to love, such as salvation from hell and wrath, yet there is still something or other in him which they cannot away with; they are not pleased with the smell of all his garments. The true believer only is willing to take a whole Christ, and the cross along with him.

3. If so, sin has a bad savour in your nostrils. Sin never begins to have an ill smell with any man till he is brought to experience the fragrant savour of Christ's garments. Then, and not till then, does it begin to appear to be what it really is, *exceeding sinful*. If the sweet smell of Christ's garments has gone about your hearts, you lothe the sin of your nature, which is the corrupt source of all your actual

tual transgressions, and the remaining unbelief of your hearts, is, in an especial manner, your burden, as being, in an eminent manner, dishonouring to God, and hurtful to your own souls. *THOU HAS*

4. If so, your conversation savours of Christ, and of the things where he is. The man whose conversation is habitually trifling and insipid (not to speak of the filthy conversation of many that savours of nothing but hell) has never smelled Christ's garments. They who dwell under his shadow, and experience the sweet savour of his good ointments, they smell, in some measure, as a *field which the Lord hath blessed.*

Their thoughts, their talk and walk, savours of the things that be of God. They love the company and converse that savours of Christ; and those whose conversation smells of him, are the *excellent ones of the earth*, in their esteem, whatever be their outward condition in the present world.

5. and *lastly*, If so, you think much upon Christ; you are often tracing the steps he has taken in the work of your redemption and salvation, in your meditations; and these meditations afford you sweet thoughts; you delight in his word, particularly the promises of it are sweet to your taste, because they all savour of Christ; you love his ordinances, because they bear the stamp of his authority, and because it is in, and by means of them, that his good ointments are poured forth, to the comfort and refreshment of your souls.

Thirdly, We shall conclude this discourse with a word of exhortation. And,

1. We exhort you who have been brought by grace to adopt the language of the text, to bless the Lord that he has been graciously pleased to give you the spiritual faculty, to discern and take up the sweetness and excellency of Christ. He

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would have been no more precious to you than to others, if your eyes had not been opened by the holy Spirit, to *see the King in his beauty*, Isa. xxxiii. 17. and your senses exercised to taste the sweetness that is in him. Be concerned to have your spiritual senses more and more exercised to favour the things of Christ; and to this end, meditate much upon the glory of his person, and his amazing love to you, which had no cause without himself; his savoury life, which was never stained with the smallest blot; the sacrifice he offered to God in your stead, for a sweet smelling favour; and his prevalent intercession within the veil for you.

Do not fail, as you have occasion, to commend Christ and his savoury garments to all about you, both with your mouth, and in your walk and conversation; tell them, as Providence gives you an opportunity, that your Beloved is more than another beloved. Let your light so shine before men that they, beholding your works, may glorify your Father who is in heaven, and take knowledge of you that ye have been with Christ, and that you really dwell under the droppings of the fragrant ointments that descend to the borders of his garments.

2. As for you who are yet strangers to Christ, and to whom all that soul-satisfying, heart-cheering, and beautifying sweetness that is in him, is but a hearsay, and will continue to be so until the Spirit be poured out upon you from on high: We exhort you to believe the misery, sinfulness and danger of your present condition, and to betake yourselves by faith to our exalted High Priest, who sits at God's right hand to give *repentance to Israel, and the forgiveness of sin*. This is your indispensable duty, and it is your great mercy, and unspeakable privilege, that you have him to come to, and that the grace

of faith, whereby he is embraced in the word of promise, is the free gift of God, Eph. ii. 8. Such is your blindness, obstinacy, and deeply rooted prejudices at Christ, that none but himself can remove them. We, therefore, exhort you, in the words of Philip to Nathanael, who, when he could not prevail with him to drop his prejudices at Christ, faith unto him, *Come and see*, John i. 46. He exhorts him to bring all his prejudices to Christ himself; and we exhort you to go and do likewise. Come and see him as set forth in the word of grace and promise, as God's prepared goodness for the poor, and for you among the rest. The work he is come about, in a gospel-dispensation, is to save sinners, of whom the chief are not excepted, 1 Tim. i. 15. One glance of him by the eye of faith will remove all the prejudices you have at him, constrain you to love him, and lay you under the pleasant necessity of adopting the language of the text, "All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made thee glad." Do you ask, What is there to be seen in Christ? we answer, it is but a very small part of his excellency that can be told. The glorious person you are called to behold by faith, is *fairer than the children of men*; he is God and man in one Divine person, and, in this respect, the wonder of angels and saints. His righteousness, which you are called to view as the ground of your justification, and access into the grace and favour of God, is a most perfect righteousness, every way commensurate to the Divine law; yea, it is a righteousness that magnifies the law, and makes it honourable, Isa. xlii. 21. His saving offices are exactly suited to the case and condition of your souls. You need spiritual wisdom, and such a righteousness as can fully answer the demands of the law,
and

and that holiness without which no man can see the Lord, and all these you may see in Christ, 1 Cor. i. 30. And in the way of uniting with his person by faith, you shall have them in your actual possession. There is a fulness in him perfectly answering to all your wants, however great and many they are; he is full of grace, John. i. 16. It is poured into his lips, that he may pour it into the hearts of men by his word and Spirit; grace and glory are what you need, and both are at his disposal, Psal. lxxxiv. 11. and you are welcome to lay claim to both along with his person, and you cannot have them separate therefrom. He only that hath the Son hath life, and shall never come into condemnation; But he that hath not the Son hath not seen life, but the wrath of God abideth on him. Kiss the Son, then, lest he be angry; embrace him by faith, and the fragrantcy and sweetness of his garments, once experienced by you, will render sin nauseous and loathsome to you, and the grace and practice of holiness sweet and savoury. In one word, you will consider the Lamb that was slain, and is now in the midst of the throne, as the object that is alone worthy of your highest esteem, approbation, and commendation; and your chief aim, in subordination to his glory, will be to win him, know him, and be found in him, not having your own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.

S E R.

S E R M O N XII.

The Bride of CHRIST standing upon his right Hand, in the Gold of Ophir.

PSAL. xlv. 9.

Kings Daughters were among thy honourable Women : Upon thy right Hand did stand the Queen in Gold of Ophir.

IN the preceding verse, we have an high commendation given to our Lord Jesus, the exalted Bridegroom of the Church. In that commendation, he is set forth as seated upon his glorious throne, clothed in robes of state and majesty, sweetly smelling of the gifts and graces of the holy Spirit, that oil of gladness wherewith he is anointed above his fellows. He was graciously pleased, for our sakes, to be *made* for a little while *lower than the angels*, Heb. ii. 9. ; but he is now *crowned with glory and honour*. In this verse, we have an account of his retinue and train. “Kings daughters were among thy honourable women : Upon thy right hand did stand the Queen in the gold of Ophir.” There is here an allusion to marriages among the Jews, especially those of them who were most eminent in station and dignity. The Bridegroom had those who attended him on his marriage-day ; and these were called *the friends of the bridegroom*, John iii. 19. Upon that day, the bride had her attendants also, and they were called her *maids of honour*, or her *honourable women* ; accordingly, this psalm being a marriage-song, the Church or Bride of Christ is set forth, both in her
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unity, and the parts of which she is composed and made up. More particularly,

1. By these *honourable women*, or *precious ones*, as the word signifies, who are supposed to attend the Bride of Christ, we may either understand particular Churches or particular believers, whom the Lord is daily adding to the Church.

2. By the *Kings daughters*, who are said to be among these *honourable women*, may be meant either those of royal blood, and princely dignity, who have been brought into the Church, from among the Gentiles, according to ancient prophecies, Psal. lxxviii. 31. "Princes shall come out of Egypt, Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God." See also Isa. xlix. 7. chap. xl. 10, 11. with many other promises to the same purpose, and of which we have reason yet to expect a more full accomplishment; or by these *kings daughters*, we may understand all true believers who may be justly designed so, because of that spiritual dignity and greatness to which they are lifted up, by virtue of their union with Christ, the King of glory, who having washed them from their sins in his own blood, hath made them "kings and priests to God" and his Father," Rev. i. 6.

3. We have a particular designation given to those *honourable women*, and *kings daughters*, taken together, they are *the Queen*. In marriages among men, the bride and her maids of honour, are different persons; but in the spiritual marriage, they are one; and though the Church of Christ is but one, being made up of many members and particular churches, it is easy to distinguish betwixt the whole and the parts of which it is composed: As we see, Cant. vi. 8, 9, 11. "There are threescore queens, and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number. My dove, my undefiled is but one, she

“ she is the only one of her mother ; she is the “ choice one of her that bare her.” By these queens, concubines and virgins, we may understand believers, of whom some are endowed with a greater, and some with a less measure and degree of gifts and grace. The Apostle John makes use of the same distinction in other words, where he puts believers into three classes, designing them *fathers, young men, and little children*, 1 John ii. 12, 13. The honourable women then, and the kings daughters, constitute *the Bride, the Lamb's wife*.

4. We may observe the great honour and dignity that is conferred upon the Queen : She stands upon the King's right hand. *Upon thy right hand did stand the Queen*. When King Solomon would put honour and respect upon his mother, he ordered her a seat at his right hand, 1 Kings ii. 19. When the Church therefore, and every particular believer, is said to stand at Christ's right hand, it denotes their being advanced to great spiritual honour and dignity. Believers are the men whom the King delights to honour. This high station, to which the Queen is advanced, is also expressive of her safety ; for while she stands on the right hand of her royal Husband, no ill can befall her, nor plague come near her dwelling ; for “ strong is his hand, and high is his right hand.” Moreover, the Queen's standing upon the right hand of the King, says, though he has been pleased to make her his bride and spouse, yet she is still willing to consider herself as his servant, and acknowledge him for her Lord ; for standing is a serving posture.

5. We may observe the Queen's clothing : She stands upon the King's right hand in the *gold of Ophir*. She is clothed according to the state of the King, and clothed at his expence : She is arrayed

in gold of Ophir; that is, in robes wrought with the gold of Ophir, which was reckoned the best in quality, as we may gather from Job xxviii. 16. and 1 Kings ix. 28. The Queen is clothed with the King himself, Rev. xii. 1. For having been brought under the influences of his Spirit, to put him on by faith, she is adorned with his righteousness, and dignified with his salvation, so that the purest gold cannot equal either her worth, or spiritual beauty and lustre.

The general doctrine contained in the text is,

Doct. *The espoused bride of Christ is advanced to great honour and dignity.* "Kings daughters were among thy honourable women: upon thy right hand did stand the Queen in gold of Ophir." Isa. xlii. 4. "Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee." As we propose not here to treat directly of the spiritual marriage betwixt Christ and the Church, the method we propose to observe, is only, through divine aid,

I. To enquire a little into the character of those who are espoused to the King.

II. Speak a little of the honour and dignity to which they are advanced.

III. Apply the doctrine in some inferences.

I. The first thing proposed, was to enquire a little into the character of those who are espoused to the King. And,

1. All who are espoused to our New-Testament King Solomon, are become dead to the law, through the body of Christ; they are dead to the law as a covenant of works, by virtue of the offering of the body of Christ, and their having been determined, in the day of his power, to lay claim to the benefit

of

of what he has done and suffered, by faith. No man is married to Christ, but he that is dead to the law. Rom. vii. 4. "My brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." Now, to be dead to the law as it is the covenant of works, is to have no dependence on our obedience thereto, for life and salvation. And as our death to, and deliverance from the law, as a covenant, is brought about by the obedience, sufferings and death of Christ, as the meritorious cause thereof, so it is by means of the law brought home, and manifested to the conscience, by the holy Ghost, in its purity, spirituality, and divine extent, that the sinner becomes actually dead unto it, as the Apostle Paul declares from his own experience, Gal. ii. 19. "I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God." A man never begins to live unto God, till he becomes dead to the law as a covenant of works.

2. They who are espoused to Christ, have been favoured with supernatural discoveries of him. "Their eyes have seen the King in his beauty," Isa. xxxiii. 17. They have seen the glorious Bridegroom, in the glass of the promise, by the light of his Spirit, as a proper and suitable match for their souls. He has manifested forth his glory to them, and given them the spiritual eye to behold it. Men may read, and hear much of Christ, in the glory of his person, suitableness of his offices, righteousness and fulness, and yet know nothing about him in a saving manner, until the holy Spirit make him known unto them, and reveal him in them, according to his promise, John xvi. 14. "He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you."

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3. They who are espoused to Christ are engaged in a close warfare against all his rivals, in their own souls, Cant. vi. 13. "What will ye see in the Shulamite? as it were the company of two armies." There is in every true believer, the spirit lusting against the flesh, and the flesh against the spirit. The new man of grace, and the old man of remaining corruption, can never be in friendly terms; for what communion can light have with darkness? or what concord can Christ have with Belial? The unregenerate man may sometimes experience an inward struggle, but it can only be betwixt different lusts, contending which shall be gratified first; or there may be a struggle between granting the cravings of the corrupt lusts, and the fear of punishment. But the Christian warfare is quite of another nature, it is between grace and corruption, and these wrestling together in one and the same faculty of the soul. The soul espoused to Christ, is at war with itself, with the remaining legality, carnality and earthly mindedness of the heart. These things press down the heaven-born soul, and it is in pain to be delivered from them, saying with the Apostle Paul, Rom. vii. 24. "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death!" or from this body of death: He is not indeed to be viewed, as expressing any doubt of being delivered therefrom in due time; for he adds, verse 25. "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord:" But the words are to be considered as most emphatically expressive of his earnest desire to be delivered.

4. All who are espoused to Christ, really love him. In whatever light he may appear to others, to them he is precious, 1 Pet. ii. 7. Their hearts are circumcised to love him, Deut. xxx. 6. Though they were once his enemies, they are now reconciled

ciled to him by the blood of his cross. He is no true Christian who loves not Christ. Though believers have it, as matter of grief and sorrow, that their love to him is not more ardent than it is, they can nevertheless appeal to Christ himself, as to the reality and sincerity of it, John xxi. 17. The love of Christ shed abroad in the hearts of believers by his Spirit, constrains them to love him. And as the true believer loves Christ himself, he loves his people, his word, and his ordinances; he delights to see his declarative glory advanced, and the crown of mediatorial lustre flourishing upon his head, in the conversion of sinners, and the upbuilding of the saints in their most holy faith.

5. They who are espoused to Christ, bring forth the fruits of the spiritual marriage; they are married unto him, that they may bring forth fruit unto God, Rom. vii. 4. Whatever fruits persons bring forth, before their union to Christ by faith, they are but spurious; however fair and beautiful they may, appear before the world, they are but the grapes of Sodom, and the apples of Gomorrah, and such as they come to be ashamed of, after their marriage with Christ, as the Apostle to the Romans intimates, when he saith, chap. vi. 21. "What fruit had ye then in these things, whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death." But these who are espoused to Christ, being delivered from the law as a covenant of works, and the guilt and reigning power of sin, and so made servants of God, they have their fruit unto holiness, Rom. vi. 22. Now, the fruits of the spiritual marriage are many; such as faith unfeigned, love without dissimulation, gospel-repentance, holy filial fear of God, a prudent and discreet zeal for his glory, with a promptitude and readiness, through

through grace, to aim at yielding obedience to all his commandments.

6. They who are espoused to Christ, have experienced the powerful, but sweetly attracting influences of the Spirit of grace, bringing them over the belly of all their prejudices at Christ, and determining their hearts to close with him, as their Head and Husband, saying, in the language of an appropriating faith, "My Beloved is mine, and I am his." Cant. ii. 16. It is in the word of promise, that Christ makes over himself to us, as our Head and Husband; and it is by virtue of promised grace, that the soul is brought to accept of him by faith, Hos. ii. 16. "And it shall be at that day, saith the Lord, that thou shalt call me Ishi, and shalt call me no more Baali." Thou shalt call me thy kind and loving Husband, and no more consider me as an austere Lord and Master.

7. All who are espoused to Christ, are well pleased with the marriage-contract, I mean the covenant of grace and promise, which was made from eternity, and stands fast between the Father and the Son. This covenant, Jesus Christ who is the Messenger of it, shews to all whom he brings to match with him, Psal. xxv. 14. He shews it to them in such a manner, as that they approve of it, acquiesce in it, and their souls cleave to it, in love and affection. They are heartily pleased with the Head of it, the glorious Bridegroom himself. They are pleased with the condition of it, as fulfilled by him. They are pleased with the great and precious promises which it contains, the sum of which is, *I will be your God, and ye shall be my people.* They are pleased with the discipline of the covenant, knowing that it tends to promote their spiritual conformity to its glorious Head. They find this covenant a never failing source of soul nourishing, and heart strengthening

strengthening consolation, under the heaviest calamities they meet with, either of an outward or inward nature; and can, when faith is in exercise, say with David, 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. "Although my house be not so with God, yet hath he made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure; this is all my salvation, and all my desire."

II. The *second* thing in the method was, to speak a little of the honour and dignity, to which the espoused Bride of Christ is advanced. And,

1. All who are really espoused to Christ, are honourably descended; they are the sons and daughters of the living God, begotten by the word of truth, James i. 18. "Of his own will begat he us (saith the Apostle) with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures." "They are born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God," John i. 13. Whatever has been once the condition of any who are now espoused to Christ, being united to him, they are partakers of a divine nature, 1 Pet. i. 4. Though they did once bear the image of the earthly, now they bear the image of the heavenly Adam; being in Christ the green fir-tree, as the branches in the vine, *their old things are passed away, and all things are become new*, 2 Cor. v. 17. Their darkness, enmity, obstinacy, and earthly mindedness, are passed away, and gracious qualities have taken their place.

2. The Bride of Christ is honourable in respect of her relations. Believers being espoused to the King's Son, they have the King, the most High God, the possessor of heaven and earth, for their Father. They have the King's Son for their Head, Husband, elder Brother, and never-failing Friend. They have the holy Spirit as their Sanctifier, Comforter, and unerring Guide to the land of uprightness,

ness, Psal. cxliii. 10. Their relation to the world lying in wickedness, is broken up in the day of the spiritual marriage, and they are morally separated therefrom; their names being inrolled among the Church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven, Heb. xii. 23. The Bride of Christ dwells alone, she is not reckoned among the nations; and from the day of her spiritual marriage, she reckons herself a stranger and a pilgrim upon the earth.

3. The Bride and Spouse of Christ has an honourable retinue and train. She is attended by the holy angels, these servants of the heavenly family who excel in strength. "They are all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation." Heb. i. 14. The angels know who are espoused to their great Lord and Master, and that most likely by an intimation from himself. They have a charge given them concerning his Bride, which they most cheerfully execute. They rejoice at the conversion of sinners, and are their ready servants ever after, for their Husband's sake; acting the part of their kind tutors and guardians, during their abode in this world, protecting and defending them from many dangers to which they are exposed in it; and at the moment of their departure out of it, they are ready to convey their souls in safety to their everlasting habitation.

4. The Bride of Christ is honourably clothed; she stands at the King's right hand in the gold of Ophir. The filthy garments of her own righteousness are taken off her, in the day of her espousals, and she is clothed with change of raiment, Zech. iii. 4. She is brought under the covert of the everlasting righteousness, which her Husband has wrought out in her room and stead; at the expence of his becoming man, yielding obedience to the law, and paying

paying the heavy penalty, to which she became liable by her breach of Covenant in the first Adam. This is the fine linen clean and white, wherewith the Bride, the Lamb's wife, is at once both dignified and most effectually defended from every threatening danger. The righteousness of Christ is the believer's best robe, Luke xv. 22. It never waxes old, nor can its beauty ever be defaced. The Queen is also adorned with the graces of the Spirit, and in this respect *she is all glorious within*; but the righteousness of her Husband is her chief ornament, this renders her accepted in the sight of God, and hides all her imperfections from the eye of justice. With the greatest propriety therefore may she rejoice in this righteousness, in the highest expressions of gratitude to him who wrought it out, as we find her doing, Isa. lx. 10. "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God, for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels."

5. The bride of Christ is honourably entertained; she has the best of provision, and that under the blessing of heaven, Psal. cxxxii. 15. While the men of the world are feeding of ashes, Isa. xlv. 20. and desiring to fill their bellies with the husks which the swine do eat; believers feed upon the finest of the wheat, and honey from the rock, Psal. lxxxvi. 16. The Bride of Christ lives upon the flesh and blood of her Husband, and that is *meat indeed, and drink indeed*, John vi. 55. Every time the believer is led out, under the influences of the Spirit, to act faith on Christ, he drinks in the virtue and efficacy of his incarnation, obedience and death, to the strengthening

ening of his soul, and the weakening of every remaining lust and corruption.

6. The bride of Christ has a very honourable station; she stands at the King's right hand. She is near his person. The spiritual Israel are a people near unto the Lord, Psal. cxlviii. 14. In respect of special nearness unto him, they dwell alone, and are not reckoned among the nations. The Queen, her standing at the King's right hand, is at once an evidence both of her dignity and safety. Believers are a dignified company, though their dignity being of a spiritual nature, does not appear to a carnal world. What the believer really is, does not yet appear, and far less does it appear what he shall be, at the manifestation of the sons of God. Hence is that of the Apostle, 1 John iii. 2. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." As if he had said, "Beloved, we who are believers, are highly dignified already; we are sons, and our likeness to the first-born among many brethren is begun in our regeneration; but our complete likeness to him, and what an inconceivable change it will make upon us, is only to take place at his second appearing, whence we shall see him as he is."

7. The Bride of Christ is admitted to the honour and dignity of intimate fellowship, and sweet intercourse with a three-one God in him. He sups with her, and she with him, Rev. iii. 20. The believer has fellowship with the Father in his love, with the Son in his sufferings, and with the Holy Spirit in applying Christ, and the benefits of his purchase to his soul. And so intimate is the communion that takes place betwixt Christ and his Bride,

Bride, that they communicate their secrets to each other; Psal. xxv. 14. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant." And as the Lord shews his people the secrets of his love and grace, so there is no secret that they desire to hide from him; they are willing that he know the best and worst about them, Psal. cxxxix. 23, 24. That the believer can enter into his closet, and tell his heavenly Father, what he could not communicate to his dearest and most intimate relations on earth, he reckons a privilege upon which he is altogether incapable to set a just value.

8. and *lastly*, Great is the honour and dignity which is in reserve for the Bride of Christ; God is not ashamed to be called her God, for he hath prepared for her a city, Heb. xi. 16. Here she has no continuing city, but she has one to come, a building of God, a house wherein are many mansions, John xiv. 2. She has a kingdom that cannot be shaken, in reserve for her; a throne that cannot be overturned, Rev. iii. 21. and a crown that fadeth not away, 1 Pet. v. 4. with an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, kept for her, and she for it, by the almighty power of God.

III. The *last* thing proposed in the method was to make some improvement.

1. The *first* use of the doctrine may be for information. And,

(1.) Hence we may see and be informed, what it is that makes men truly great and honourable; it is not the riches of this world, nor their being had in esteem by the men of it; No, true greatness consists in being brought into a state of nearness to a God of grace, by faith's union to the person of his Son.

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(2.) Hence

(2.) Hence see, whence it is, that the people of God account themselves strangers and sojourners on this earth, Psal. cxix. 19. Why, the reason is, they are born from above, they are partakers of a divine nature; and those who are so, cannot content themselves with this world as their habitation, nor with the things of it as their portion; and therefore they consider themselves as strangers and pilgrims in it.

(3.) We may see, that whatever condition the people of God may be in, while they sojourn in Meshech, they are never friendless nor helpless. They may be in a very heartless condition as to any outward help and comfort; earthly friends and comforts may fail the people of God, and like Absalom's mule, leave them in the thickets of adversity. But Christ their immortal Husband, is a *friend that sticketh closer than a brother*, and he never fails to own the relation in which he stands to his people, in the time of need, nor to act agreeably thereto; as they have ever found in their comfortable experience. When David was pursued by Saul, and there was no man to know him, he found refuge in his God, as he declares, Psal. cxlii. 4, 5. "I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me; refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul. I cried unto thee, I said thou art my refuge, and my portion is in the land of the living."

(4.) Hence see the safety of believers; they have a strong though invisible guard that constantly attends them, as we see in the case of Elisha, 2 Kings vi. 17. The children of God are more indebted to the ministry of angels for their outward preservation than they are aware of, though they neither merit nor claim divine honours from the saints on that account. But does Christ leave the care of his

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Bride and Spouse with angels, though they excel in strength? No, such is his love and condescension, that he carries her in his bosom, and keeps her as the apple of his eye, Isa. xl. 11. "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd; he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young." He has that care of his people that one has for the apple of his eye, which is great, the eye being the tenderest member of the body, and the apple of it, the tenderest part of the eye.

Finally, Are believers so highly dignified? Then, they should live up to their high station and dignity. They should not content themselves with living as the rest of the world, nor doing as they do. They should not "be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of their minds," Rom xii. 2. They should set their affections upon things which are above, and not upon the vain transitory profits and pleasures of this world. They should not seek their own things solely nor chiefly, but those things which concern the glory of God. They should be concerned to act the part of friends, and faithful witnesses for Christ, by bearing testimony to the word of his patience, and opposing whatever is contrary to his truths and ways, as they have an opportunity and a call in Providence.

2. The *second* use of the doctrine may be for consolation to all who are espoused to Christ. And,

It is matter of consolation to you who have been determined to take Christ for your Husband, that he is yours; you may say, *My Beloved is mine and I am his*, Cant. ii. 16. and this is infinitely more than if you could say, All the world is mine: It would all make but a scanty portion without him: You have an interest in all his perfections; his wisdom

dom is for your direction, his power for your protection, and the treading down of all your spiritual enemies, as straw is trodden down for the dunghill. His goodness and all-sufficiency is for the supply of all your necessities, Deut. xxxii. 28. "The fountain, that is, the spiritual seed of Jacob, shall be upon a land of corn and wine, also his heavens shall drop down the dew." His mercy is yours to pity and sympathise with you under all your distresses: Your Husband is a merciful and faithful High Priest, and most sensibly touched with the feeling of your infirmities. His faithfulness is your never-failing security for the accomplishment of all the promises to you, Psal. xci. 4. "His truth shall be thy shield and buckler." Whatever changes may take place with you, your Husband is still the same, the same in himself, and he will prove unchangeably the same in his love to you. His justice is yours to avenge all the injuries done to you, 2 Thess. i. 6. His eye of omniscience is ever upon you for good, Psal. cxxi. 4. "Behold he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep." His spiritual and gracious presence is constantly with you; he will never fail you nor forsake you, Heb. xiii. 5. No fiery tempest nor swelling flood shall separate between Christ and you; see his promise for it, Isa. xliii. 2. "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: When thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." In one word, all things are yours because ye are Christ's. All the promises, respecting both the life that now is, and that which is to come, are yours. You may take a view of your inheritance, as laid before you by the Spirit of God, 1 Cor. iii. 21, 22, 23. there you see all things are your own.

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Ministers are yours for your edification ; the world is yours in Christ's right, and were it necessary for your real good, it behoved all to be at your service. Life is yours. The believer only has the comfort of life, and he only attains to the end of it, which is the glory of God. Death is yours to carry you into the King's palace. Things present or to come are yours ; all present things, whether prosperous or adverse, are working for your good, and whatever things are yet to come must do the same ; hence is that of the Apostle, Rom. viii. 28. " We know " that all things work together for good to them " that love God, to them who are the called accord- " ing to his purpose."

3. The *last* use of the doctrine may be in a word of exhortation, *first*, to those who are espoused to Christ ; *secondly*, to those who are still wedded to the law as a Covenant of Works, and so under the guilt and dominion of sin.

(1.) You who are espoused to Christ, we exhort you to give praise and thanks to his name, that he was graciously pleased to assume your nature into a personal union with himself, thereby laying a foundation for a spiritual marriage betwixt him and you. His taking on the human nature was such an act of condescension, as may justly excite in you the highest acts of gratitude and wonder. It was owing solely to his grace that he became so poor as to appear in the likeness of sinful flesh, that ye through his poverty might be rich. Bless the Lord for that revelation of his powerful arm to you, whereby he hath brought you to give heart and hand to Christ, notwithstanding all your prejudices at him, and the way of salvation through him. This was the Lord's own doing, and the fruit of his everlasting love to you. He loved you with *an everlasting love, and therefore he has drawn you*
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to himself, Jer. xxxi. 3. We exhort you to live near your Husband; it is truly good for you to draw near to God, Psal. lxxiii. 28. And if you would live near him, live by faith, and be much in prayer, meditation, and self-examination; these are special means in the use of which the soul follows hard after Christ, Psal. lxiii. 8. Be concerned to bring forth the fruits of the spiritual marriage; be students of holiness, mortifying the deeds of the body through the Spirit. Let your thoughts, words, and actions, tend to holiness, and higher degrees of conformity to the royal law of your Husband, as the rule of your duty, than you have yet attained. Remember, that though, in virtue of your marriage with Christ, you are set free from the law as it is a Covenant of Works, so as that you can neither be justified thereby nor condemned, yet you are still under the law as the rule of your obedience; and your marriage with Christ lays you under the most endearing obligations to endeavour, in the strength of grace, to yield a chearful and ready obedience to all its precepts. Be concerned to abound in good works, that ye may be as a dew from the Lord of hosts, and a blessing in the places where Providence has settled the bounds of your habitation. Be tender-hearted and charitable to the poor, especially those of them whom you have reason, in charity, to look upon as belonging to the household of faith, according to that of the Apostle, Gal. vi. 10. "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, and especially to them who are of the household of faith." Cast all your burdens over upon your Husband, and go up from the wilderness leaning upon the arm of his power. Seek to have the honour and declarative glory of your royal Husband promoted, while he is pleased to continue you in the
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the world ; plead for success and prosperity to the gospel, and particularly in the corner where Providence has cast your lot. Pray that real conversion, and solid edification may follow upon a dispensation of the gospel among you. He is faithful who has said, and is still saying of Zion, “ There will I make the horn of David to bud ;—his enemies will I clothe with shame, but upon himself shall his crown flourish.”

(2.) As for you who are still wedded to the law as a Covenant of Works, and so under the guilt, dominion and power of sin, having hitherto made light of all the kind offers of love which Christ has been making to you. We exhort you,

[1.] To consider the woful condition you are in; you are under the broken law, and do ye not hear it? Gal. iv. 21. It is denouncing all its curses against you, because you have not continued in the things written therein, Gal. iii. 10. *As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse.* You are lying under the curse of the law, and the wrath of God, and these are burdens you are neither able to bear, nor yet to extricate yourselves from, by all your own endeavours.

[2.] We beseech you to consider what you are doing, so long as you refuse to be espoused to the Son of God ; why, you are serving Satan, *fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind*, Eph. ii. 3. and so *treasuring up wrath to yourselves against the day of wrath.*

[3.] Consider, that if you die in a state of estrangement from Christ, you will fall into the hands of the living God, who will deal with you, not only as covenant-breakers in the first Adam, but also as rejectors of the remedy which he has provided. Consider that serious and important question which the Apostle puts to all the hearers of the gospel, Heb.

Heb. ii. 3. "How shall we escape, if we neglect
 "so great a salvation?" He does not ask the ques-
 tion, expecting an answer; but it is as much as if he
 had said, there is no escaping damnation, but in the
 way of embracing Christ by faith, and that salva-
 tion which the gospel exhibits to us through him.
 We intreat you to consider, that Christ is yet in
 your offer; he is the free gift of God to you, John
 iii. 16. *Jehovah* is yet saying to you, "Behold my
 "servant whom I uphold, mine elect, in whom my
 "soul delighteth," Isa. xlii. 1. Behold him as a
 fit match for you; behold him, that is, believe in him,
 take him for your Head and Husband. Tho' you
 have played the harlot with many lovers, yet our
 Lord Jesus is willing to receive you; he hates put-
 ting away, but delights in mercy. See his readi-
 ness to espouse you to himself, Hos. ii. 19. "I
 "will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I
 "will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and
 "in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mer-
 "cies: I will even betroth thee unto me in faith-
 "fulness; and thou shalt know the LORD." But
 some of you may be ready to say, tho' Christ be willing
 to be espoused to me, I have no heart for matching
 with him. Answer, This is readily the case, and
 it is the case of all who are in their natural state.
 But for your encouragement, consider, that our
 Lord Jesus is not only declaring his readiness to be
 espoused to you, but he is promising also that poor
 sinners who have not yet stretched out the hand of
 faith to him, shall do it, Hos. ii. 16. "It shall be
 "at that day, saith the Lord, that thou shalt call
 "me *Ishi*," my Man, my Husband. Be concern-
 ed then, to plead the accomplishment of the pro-
 mise, each for himself, and herself in particular.
 And thus being determined to give yourselves to
 the Lord, riches and honour, grace and glory, shall
 "be

be your own ; “ for he that hath the Son hath life, “ and shall never come into condemnation, but is “ passed from death to life. But he who hath not “ the Son, hath not seen life, but the wrath of “ God abideth on him.” As long as you are without a faith’s interest in Christ, divine wrath is hanging over your heads, as a thick cloud ready to break upon you every moment. Know then and consider, that a crucified Christ is the only covert from this dreadful tempest, and that you are welcome to come in under his shadow, and that it is only by the faith of his Spirit’s operation that you can do so, Eph. ii. 8. “ By grace are ye saved “ through faith ; and that not of yourselves, it is “ the gift of God.”

S E R M O N XIII.

The espoused BRIDE of CHRIST, relinquishing her Father’s House, and her own People.

PSAL. xlv. 10.

*Hearken, O Daughter, and consider, and incline
thine ear ; Forget also thine own People, and
thy Father’s house.*

IN the preceding part of this psalm, JEHOVAH the Father, or the Psalmist in his name, has been speaking to Christ, the Royal Bridegroom of the Church ; and in the words presently read, and downward to verse 16th, he directs his speech to

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the espoused Bride of Christ, exciting and encouraging her to act dutifully towards him. In the words of the text, she is exhorted to make her husband the covering of her eyes, from all other lords and lovers. "Hearken, O daughter, (says he) and consider, and incline thine ear: Forget also thine own people, and thy father's house." Where we have,

1. A kindly and endearing compellation given to the Church collectively considered, or to the particular believer. JEHOVAH designs her his daughter, and, in doing so, he acknowledges himself to be her Father. God is a Father to all who are espoused to his Son, and they are his sons and daughters. The honour and happiness springing from this near relation to a God of grace, are held out to sinners, as most forcible motives to prevail with them to give heart and hand to Christ, 2 Cor. vi. 17, 18. "Come out from among them," viz. from among the world lying in wickedness, "and I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

2. We have the attention of the Bride demanded, while JEHOVAH lays before her the duties of the relation, in which she stands to his Son. "Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear." These several expressions are all much of the same import, setting forth the diligent attention the Church, and every member thereof, ought to pay to the exhortation here tendered. Only the various expressions made use of, in order to prevail with the Church to comply with the exhortation, evidently import the greatness of the duty called to, the difficulty of complying with the call, and the earnestness with which the duty is enjoined. "Hearken, O daughter, consider, and incline thine ear." Hearken, in order to consideration;

ration; and consider the matter so, as that the result may be, a cordial compliance with the duty called for.

3. We have the duty to which her attention is so pressingly called for. "Forget also thine own people, and thy father's house." These words are spoken according to the law of marriage, which takes both parties bound to give up with their former relations and connections so far as needful, in order to their cleaving faithfully and finally to one another in love, Gen. ii. 24. As if JEHOVAH had said, "Now that the place of thy tent is to be enlarged, and the curtains of thine habitations stretched out, Isa. liv. 2. so as that there may be room for the accession of the Gentiles to the Church: Let the Jew give up with the carnal ordinances, rites and ceremonies which were imposed, only until the times of reformation, and take up with Christ and gospel-grace, the substance of these shadows; and let the Gentile abandon his Pagan rites, and impious idolatries, in the way of embracing a crucified Christ by faith, whom God hath given to be *a light to the Gentiles, and his salvation to the ends of the earth.* And let both Jew and Gentile come away from the law as a Covenant of Works, and place their confidence solely in Christ, the glorious Bridegroom of souls, who, in virtue of what he has done and suffered, is become "the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." From the words thus opened, we observe this doctrine:

Doct. That it is the indispensable duty of all, and especially of those who are espoused to Christ, to give up with, and turn their backs upon whatever is offensive to him, and a hindrance to them in the way of their duty to him. "Hearken, O daughter, and consider,

“consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine
“own people, and thy father’s house.”

The method we shall observe in discoursing further from these words, under Divine aid, is,

I. To mention some things implied in them.

II. Endeavour to point out some things which persons are to give up with, and turn their backs upon, in their matching with Christ, and abiding by him.

III. Enquire how persons are to give up with these things.

IV. Give the reasons of the doctrine.

V. Endeavour to make some improvement of the whole.

I. It was proposed to mention some things implied in the words. And,

1. The words imply, that God, in the person of the Father, is the efficient cause, and fountal spring of all the blessings and benefits of redemption. He has found out, qualified, and sent his Son to be our Kinsman-Redeemer, Head and Husband. And as he made the first marriage, by bringing the woman to the man, *Gen. ii. 22.* so he makes the spiritual marriage betwixt Christ and the soul, by speaking to the heart of the intended bride, and powerfully, though kindly, determining her to close the match with his Son.

None come to the Son, but those whom the Father draws with the cords of his everlasting love, and these must come. “No man (saith our Lord) can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him. Every man, therefore, that hath heard and learned of the Father, cometh unto me,” *John vi. 44, 45.*

2. That God the Father has a special love to, and regard for all who are espoused to his Son.

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He carries towards them, in every case, with the bowels of a tender hearted father. He gives them the most endearing names and designations, as that of *daughters, dear sons, and pleasant children*, Jer. xxxi. 20. "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him." He instructs them, shewing them direction with his eye, Psal. xxxii. 8. He protects them from danger, and feeds them "with the finest of the wheat, and honey from the rock," and though he corrects and chastises them, it is not in wrath, but in love, and for their profit, that they may be partakers of his holiness, Heb. xii. 10. Fathers of the flesh, are sometimes in hazard of using the rod more for their own pleasure than their childrens profit, but this is never the case with our heavenly Father.

3. That God's fatherly care and kindness to those who are espoused to his Son, runs out, in a special manner, in the way of his speaking kindly to them, and instructing them in the way of duty, by his word and Spirit; "Hearken, O daughter, consider, and incline thine ear," &c. The Psalmist records it as a special act of the grace and goodness of God, that he leads his people in the way of truth and duty, Psal. xxv. 8, 9. "Good and upright is the Lord; therefore will he teach sinners in the way. The meek will he guide in judgment; and the meek will he teach his way." The word of God is a light to the feet of his people, and a lamp to their paths, and by it they are kept from the paths of the destroyer.

4. The words imply, that we are naturally dull of hearing what the Lord is saying to us in his word, and by the dispensations of his providence, we need *line upon line, and precept upon precept*. "God speaks once, yea twice, but man perceiveth it not," Job xxxiii. 14. How backward was the spouse

spouse to rise from the bed of spiritual sloth, and give suitable entertainment to her Beloved, though calling upon her, in the most affectionate and endearing manner, and enforcing the call with the most affecting arguments? Cant. v. 2, 3. And the Apostle complains of the Hebrews, that they were dull of hearing, Heb. v. 11. Though the principle of grace lives, and abides in the heart of the believer, yet grace is often very low in respect of exercise; and while the believer is in the body, he has a weight of corruption hanging, as it were, upon every grace of the spirit, the flesh lusting against the spirit, so that he cannot do the good that he would, Rom. vii. 15. And the corrupt principle often prevails so far, that he doth those things, which, according to his renewed part, he would not, as the Apostle Paul declares was the case with him, Rom. vii. 19. "The good that I would, I do not; but the evil that I would not, that I do." When the Lord calls us to the performance of such duties as lie cross to our outward advantage, external ease and quiet in a present world; how difficult it is to give the obedient ear in these cases, we may gather from the backwardness evidenced by Moses, Jeremiah, and others, when called to difficult work.

5. That what the Lord speaks to us in his word is of the last moment and importance. This is evident from the pains here taken to gain our attention, and the pathetic manner in which the exhortation is tendered: "Hearken, O daughter, consider, and incline thine ear."

They are not vain things which the Lord speaks to us in his word, but things with which our everlasting peace stands inseparably connected, Luke xix. 42.; so that giving the deaf ear to what he says, is not only highly dishonouring to him, but inconsistent

inconsistent also, in the highest degree, with true love to our own souls. It is in the way of hearing his voice, with faith and affection, that the soul begins and continues to live, Isa. lv. 3. "Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live," &c. And by refusing to hear his voice, men choose death, and refuse life. For those who will not give the obedient ear to the word of life, while it is *the accepted time*, and *the day of salvation*, may lay their account with hearing heavy tidings, when their day of grace comes to a period, Prov. i. 24, 25, 26. "Because I have called, (saith the Lord) and ye refused, I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded: But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof; I will laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh."

6. That a suitable attention to the will of God laid before us in his word, requires the utmost care and diligence of the heart and soul. So much is evidently implied in the manner of tendering this exhortation in the text. All who would comply with the duty here enjoined, must *hearken, consider, and incline their ear* to what the Lord is saying to them. *All superfluity of naughtiness* must be laid apart, and *the ingrafted word* received with *meekness*, James i. 21. Flesh and blood must not be consulted with, carnal ease, worldly gain, and pleasures, with every thing interfering with our duty to Christ, so far as he is pleased to acquaint us therewith, are to be relinquished. All who would be blessed with *faithful Abraham*, must be content to do as he did, Heb. xi. 8. "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went." Religion would have a far greater
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backing, at least in appearance, were men to be assured that it would not prove detrimental to what they take to be their interest in a present world.

7. The words imply, that our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom believers are espoused, is highly worthy of all our affection and esteem. He is worthy for whom we are called to forget our own people, and our father's house. He is *the brightness of the Father's glory; the Prince of the kings of the earth; fairer than the children of men; and the chief among ten thousand*; and full of grace and truth, John i.

16. There is enough in him to fill the most empty hand, and enlarged heart. His beauty is beyond compare, and his riches are unsearchable.

8. The words imply, that there is much opposition that attends a person's matching with Christ, and abiding by him. So much is imported in the pressing exhortation; "Hearken, O daughter, consider, and incline thine ear; forget thine own people, and thy father's house." There is a strong opposition in every man naturally, against his embracing Christ. Such an opposition as nothing but Divine power is able to destroy. Satan and the world oppose themselves to a soul's closing with Christ at first, and though a total and final separation can never take place between Christ and the soul that is espoused to him, Rom. viii. 35. yet the believer may be under sad temptations, to take his hand from the plough, and be often chargeable with casting too favourable an eye upon his own people and his father's house, through the remaining legality of his heart. We see that David found reason to call in his soul from her partial departures from God, Psal. cxvi. 7. "Return (says he) unto thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee."

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9. The words seem to imply, that there is not only much opposition to a soul's coming forward to embrace Christ, and to its abiding with him, but also, that the man is too ready to give way to that opposition. "Hearken, O daughter, consider, and *"incline thine ear."* Would he say, a carnal world joining its profits and pleasures, on the one hand, with its reproaches and frowns, on the other, representing the way of godliness as hard and unequal, is an opposing enemy to your complying with the call, and you are by far too much disposed to listen thereto. Alas! how ready are men to give head to these solicitations that have a tendency to keep them away from Christ, or draw them back from their duty to him? Satan tries what his promises of every thing pleasing to the flesh can do to keep men from Christ; and if he succeeds not in this way, he sets up a graceless generation against the professors of religion, to reproach and persecute them, because they *run not with them into the same excess of riot*, 1 Pet. iv. 4, 5. And all these things have their own influence with many, keeping some from closing with Christ, and drawing others away from him, who have never been with him, otherwise than by an external profession of friendship to him.

Finally, The duty called for in the text, implies in it, a renouncing and giving up with all other lords and lovers, and taking a God in Christ for the portion of our cup, and the lot of our inheritance. A cordial compliance with this call, amounts to the acknowledgment and profession of the Church, Isa. xxvi. 13. "O Lord our God, other lords besides thee have had dominion over us; but by thee only will we make mention of thy name." Our *forgetting our own people, and our father's house*, has in it, a giving ourselves unto the

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Lord Jesus, to be saved by him, and to serve him, being willing, that we, and whatever we can lay claim to in the world, be at his disposal, after the example of the Macedonians, 2 Cor. viii. 5. In one word, the exercise called for in the words, has in it, a resting all our hopes and expectations on Christ, and what he has done and suffered, with a firm purpose, through grace, to look out for the end of our faith, even the salvation of our souls; in the diligent use of those means which are connected with that end: Watching over, and warring against every bias in our own hearts, to lay another foundation for our access to, and acceptance with God, than that which he has laid, which is Christ, and him crucified.

II. The *second* head in the method, was, to mention some things which persons are to give up with, in the way of embracing Christ, and abiding by him. And let it be observed here for caution, that, when we speak of these things which persons are called to give up with in the way of their closing with Christ by faith, we would not be so understood, as if we meant, that there is any priority or posteriority in respect of time, in the case of a person, his embracing Christ by faith, and his giving up with his former lords and lovers; for both take place in the same instant: Nor do we mean, that these things are to be given up with, by persons, as any previous qualification recommending them to Christ, and the divine favour in him: These things noticed, we proceed to observe,

1. That when persons embrace Christ by faith, they give up with the law as a Covenant of Works. The old covenant is our father's house, and those who are hanging by it are our own people. Every man naturally, has a strong attachment to be under the law, Gal. iv. 21. and to seek life and happiness

happinefs by his own obedience thereto, which is owing to his ignorance both of himself and of the law. For no man can be married both to Christ and the law at the same time; and there is no being married to Christ, before the person's relation to the law as a covenant be broken up, Rom. vii. 4. No man can be under the law, and under grace, at the same time, Rom. vii. 15. Now, for a person to give up with the law as a Covenant of Works, is to lay aside all hope and expectation of being justified in the sight of God, on the footing of his own obedience to the law. All who are espoused to Christ, have heard the law, and seen its divine purity and extent in the light of the holy Spirit; and so being brought to know they could not be justified by their own obedience thereto, they have been determind to believe in Christ, *that they might be justified by the faith of Christ,* and *not by the works of the law,* Gal. ii. 16. All who are really espoused to Christ, have parted with the law on terms both safe and honourable, that is, in the way of presenting it with the perfect righteousness of Christ, in the hand of faith, as a silencing and satisfying answer to all the demands which it had upon them: They have taken him as *the end of the law for righteousness* to them in particular.

2. Self is given up with, in the case of all who are espoused to the glorious Bridegroom of souls. All who have really given heart and hand to Christ, he has taught them in a saving manner, that there is no coming after him so as to follow him to the kingdom of glory, but in the way of denying self, taking up the cross daily, and in that way following him, Luke ix. 23. Self is an obstinate rival to Christ, and until a man is brought to give up with it, he sees no beauty in Christ, why he is to be desired,

desired, and so despises him in all his offices. He has not become a fool, that he may be wise indeed; and so he despises Christ as a Prophet. He has not seen his own righteousness as insufficient to cover him from the stormy tempest of vindictive wrath; and therefore, he makes light of that righteousness which the gospel reveals. He has not seen sin to be that abominable thing which God's soul hateth, and so he despises Christ as a King; saying, on the matter, his lips are his own, and who is Lord over him? When a man is brought to deny himself, then he sees his own wisdom to be folly; he sees that his own righteousness and works cannot profit him, and that no more is needful to effect his utter ruin, than his being left to walk and wander in his own counsels.

3. In a person's espousing with Christ, he must give up with an inordinate love to the world, to the riches, honours and pleasures of the world: Hence is that exhortation we have 1 John ii. 5. "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world; if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." Few, comparatively considered, believe what a dangerous enemy the world is to their souls. We find love to the world prevailed with that young man we read of, Luke xviii. 23. to break up the treaty with Christ about eternal life, when he heard, he behoved either to part with this world, or lose a better; he gave the present world the preference. "He went away sorrowful, and very heavy, for he had great possessions." The Apostle Paul knew of no other way of getting the better of this world, as an enemy, but by the cross of Christ, Gal. vi. 14. And another Apostle tells us elsewhere, that the *victory whereby we overcame the world, is our faith.*

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They who are really brought to stretch out the hand of faith to Christ, desire through grace to have no faster a hold of persons and things in a present world, than that they could quit, and give up with them all for Christ, were he calling them to do it. This is evident from what our Lord declares must be found in the case of all his true Disciples, Luke xiv. 26. "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and his mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." Such is the love that every true believer has to Christ, that his love to all those relations, and even to his own life, which of all is dearest to him, is but hatred compared with it.

4. Persons upon their espousals with Christ, are brought to give up with the vain, frothy, sinful customs and fashions of the people among whom they dwell. To *walk according to the course of this world*, is the character of a man in a natural state, Eph. ii. 2. There are many who think, if they do as the most of men do, they may be excused; and it is lamentable to hear even some professors, when left to fall into any of the sinful courses of the world, pleading the example of the multitude, as an extenuation of their offences. They who are really espoused to Christ, should, and through grace, they will endeavour, *to live as the children of God, harmless and without rebuke*, aiming at doing to all men, as they would they should do to them, submitting to the customs and fashions of the places and people among whom their lot is cast, in so far as they are not inconsistent with the Divine Law and Testimony; but when the religion and practice of those among whom they live, do not quadrate with this rule, they must not be so complaisant as conform to them therein. Though

Though they should be called nice, precise, scrupulous, and perhaps put under worse characters on that account ; disconformity to this world, in all its sinful courses, is strictly enjoined by the Holy Ghost, upon all who would evidence themselves to be the true friends and followers of Christ, Rom. xii. 2. " Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God."

5. In coming to, and abiding with Christ by faith, persons must give up with the love of sin as well as the practice of it. Real conversion does not consist in a mere external change in respect of practice, nor yet in giving up with a bad for a good profession of religion. Herod did many things upon hearing John the Baptist. Simon Magus professed to believe in Christ, and was baptized in his name ; and yet both continued in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity. A prevailing regard for any lust, or idol in the heart, is inconsistent with faith unfeigned, and true love to Christ : Hence saith the Psalmist, Psal. lxvi. 18. " If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me."

6. and lastly, *To forget our own people, and our father's house, is to lay aside every weight, and the sins which do most easily beset us*, Heb. xii. 1. Original sin, particularly as it works by unbelief, is a sin that doth most easily beset us. There are constitutional sins, if we may so call them, or some sins to which men are more addicted than others, from their natural temper and disposition ; and there are some sins also, to which men have strong temptations, arising from their stations and connections of life in the world. David speaks of some sin, which he emphatically calls *his iniquity*, Psal. xviii. 23. There are some lusts and idols, which are like the
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right hand and right eye, very dear and hard to be parted with by the man. Nevertheless, when he is brought forward under the power of divine grace, to make choice of the one thing needful, he is at the same time kindly disposed and enabled, to turn his back upon them, saying with Ephraim, "What have I to do any more with idols," Hof. xiv. 8. ; and with the Church, Isa. xxvi. 13. "O Lord our God, other lords besides thee have had dominion over us ; but by thee only will we make mention of thy name."

We should now pass on to the *third* thing proposed in the method, but shall conclude at the time, with a few inferences from what has been said. And,

1. We may infer the misery of all men by nature. They are in their father's house, and among their own people ; they are still in the house of the first Adam, under the law as a broken covenant, and so under the curse of that law, Gal. iii. 10. They have Satan for their father : Hence saith our Lord to the unbelieving Jews, John viii. 44. "You are of your father the devil, and his works ye will do." They are serving divers lusts and pleasures, and earning the wages of eternal death and destruction, Rom. vi. 23. They have nothing to look for, as children of the first Adam, but a portion of wrath. As the Apostle declares, Eph. ii. 3. *fire, snares, brimstone, and an horrible tempest*, will be the portion of every man's cup for ever, who lives and dies under the law-covenant, Psal. xi. 6. There is no escaping *the wrath to come*, but by faith in Christ Jesus.

2. We may infer the unspeakable happiness of all true believers ; they are delivered from the house and family of Satan ; they are *not under the law*,

law, but under grace, Rom. vi. 14. They have God for their Father, and so are entitled to an inheritance that excels in beauty, Jer. iii. 19. They are espoused to an husband, of whom it is witnessed that *he liveth*, Heb. vii. 8. And because he lives, they shall live also, John xiv. 19. They are set free from the law as a Covenant of Works, so that, considered in that light, it has no power either to command, or condemn them; what the law saith, as vested with the form of a covenant, it saith to them that are under it; but the believer is not under it in that view, and therefore it says nothing to him. Christ, to whom believers are espoused, hath fulfilled the preceptive part of the law in their stead, and God is well pleased for his righteousness sake, Isa. xlii. 21. And as he has fulfilled the preceptive part of the law, by the obedience of his life, he has likewise borne the penalty of it for them, Gal. iii. 13. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." And the same Apostle, speaking in the name of all true believers, saith, 2 Cor. v. 21. "He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." God hath made Christ a sin-offering, in the room and stead of a whole elect world, that upon the footing of his offering, or complete satisfaction revealed in the gospel, and claimed by sinners, in the way of believing, they might be constituted legally righteous in the sight of a holy God.

3. We may see what to think of those who are for taking up with Christ, and yet giving entertainment to his rivals and competitors. This is the case of all who make a profession of friendship to Christ, but rest short of regenerating grace; many like Saul, have been turned into other men in appearance

pearance, from what they once were, and yet have not become new men, 1 Sam. x. 6. The hypocrite puts on Christ's livery, and yet continues under the power of his lusts and idols. He contents himself with a *form of godliness*, denying the power thereof. The legalist, even while he hears the gospel, and professes to believe it, is nevertheless endeavouring to *work out a righteousness for himself, being ignorant of the righteousness of God*. And there are many, whose convictions, though they have gone so far as to let them see, that they cannot get to heaven, solely upon the ladder of their own righteousness; yet they aim at coming to the mark of the prize, at least partly upon the footing of their own righteousness. They seek *righteousness as it were by the works of the law*; and so depend partly upon Christ, and partly upon themselves, for life and salvation, Rom. ix. 32. There are many, alas! who profess not only to believe the gospel, but even to preach it to others, who seem not to think that the righteousness of Christ is any further needful for men, than to help them out where they fail. But whoever seeks righteousness by the works of the law, either in whole or in part, he is practically saying, that Christ died without a cause. For "if righteousness came by the works of the law, Christ is dead in vain," Gal. ii. 21. There are many also who seem to set fair out from their *father's house*, and their *own people*, who, when they begin to meet with trials in their way heavenward, look back, and turn away from following Christ. When men find that their carnal selfish views and interests, cannot be promoted in the way of a steadfast adherence to truth and duty, then they are offended in Christ, and turn their backs upon him, like those we read of, John. vi. 66. They felt the sayings of Christ begin to bear hard upon

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their darling lusts ; they could not go down with the carnal notions they had conceived about the Messiah's kingdom ; and they call them *hard sayings*, and altogether unbearable ; and from that time, they *went back, and walked no more with Christ*.

3. We may see matter of reproof even to those who have been determined to relinquish the family of Satan, and give up with their holding by the law-covenant. I say, even they are reprovable from this subject. Though they are delivered from spiritual Egypt, yet they are often too much attached to the law and Covenant of Works, whereby they dishonour their heavenly Father, and bring perplexity into their own consciences. Now, the legal disposition of believers evidences itself, when they go into their own hearts to seek a ground of hope and comfort, and do not keep their eye solely upon Christ in his perfect righteousness, as the never-failing ground of all their comfort. They discover the legal bias that is in their hearts, when they begin to think upon their being overtaken in sin, through remaining corruption, and the temptations of Satan ; that the Lord will utterly cast them off. It is true, the sins which the Lord's own people are sometimes left to fall into, afford them just ground for repentance, and deep humiliation and sorrow before God ; but it is as certain, that they lay no just foundation for them to conclude, that the Lord will cast them off. No, the Lord will not quit with his inheritance, nor forsake his people. He will neither turn away from them to do them good, nor suffer them to depart from him, Jer. xxxii. 14. : And therefore, even amidst the prevalence of iniquity, they should say with the Psalmist, Psal. lxxv. 3. " Iniquities prevail against me ; as for our transgressions, thou shalt purge them away." I must confess,

confess, would he say, for it will not deny, that I have not only sin dwelling in me, but that it often so far prevails against me, as to lead me captive to the law of sin and death. But shall I, and others, who too often find this to be the case, in our sad experience, give way to despair on that account? No, *there is forgiveness with thee*; and we trust, through the Advocate whom we have with the Father, and who is also *the propitiation for our sins*, that thou wilt *purge away our transgressions, and cast all our sins into the deeps of the sea.*

Finally, We may see what is the indispensable duty of all the hearers of the gospel, and that is, to listen to the gracious invitation tendered in the text: "Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and *incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house:*" Turn your backs upon spiritual Egypt: Come away from the family of Satan, from the law as a covenant, from your own people, the world lying in wickedness, from the sinful pleasures of the world, and even the lawful comforts and enjoyments of it, in so far as they stand in the way of your complying with the design of the gospel, which is to have sinners espoused to Christ. In parting with all these for Christ, you will make a happy and enriching change. Our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Bridegroom, is saying graciously to every unbeliever, the same on the matter with what Saul said wickedly to the men of Israel concerning David, *Will the son of Jesse give every one of you fields and vineyards, &c.* Will sin, Satan, the world, and the divers lusts and pleasures which you are serving, give you that which can really be a satisfying portion to your souls? They never can; Oh then! be intreated to embrace God's unspeakable gift; accept of Christ as offered to you in the gospel,

gospel, and you will find every thing desirable in him; you will find God as the God of peace in him; you will find rest to your souls in him; pardon, peace, joy and consolation, are to be found in him, and only in him: In a word, you will find grace and glory in him. But if you reject the offers of his love, and make light of his kind proposals to you in the gospel, and continue to do so till your day of grace is ended, then you will be found among that unhappy company, who shall take up the bitter lamentation which you have Jer. viii. 20. *The summer is past, the harvest is ended, and we are not saved.* Oh! be intreated to think of these things ere it be too late. Beware, lest it come upon you, which is written in the Prophets, *Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish.* We call and invite you, in the name of the glorious Bridegroom of souls, to forget your own people, and your father's house, and go with the man Christ Jesus. All things are ready for your espousals with the King's son. Every thing on his part is ready, and he is willing to receive you as you are, and then he will make you what he would have you to be. You can never make yourselves one whit more ready for the spiritual marriage than you are, by all your legal endeavours. If the Bridegroom wash you not, *you can have no part with him*, John xiii. 8. And it is in the way of uniting with him by faith, that you can partake of the justifying and cleansing efficacy of his blood; and so be made to appear in the eye of justice, as doves whose wings are covered with silver, and their feathers with yellow gold. O be intreated to consider, what a God of love and grace is calling you to leave, and what he is calling you to come to the enjoyment of. He is inviting you to quit with the vilest slavery, and enjoy a glorious liberty. He is calling

calling you from famine to plenty, from death to life, from hell to heaven, and from shame and disgrace, to the everlasting enjoyment of an *exceeding great, and an eternal weight of glory.*

S E R M O N XIV.

PSAL. xlv. 10.

*Hearken, O Daughter, and consider, and incline
thine ear : Forget also thine own People, and
thy Father's House.*

[The Second Sermon on the Text.]

THE doctrine observed from these words was,
“ That it is the indispensable duty of all,
“ and especially of those who are espoused to Christ,
“ to give up with, and turn their backs upon every
“ thing that is offensive to him, and a hindrance
“ to them in the way of their duty to him.

The method proposed was,

I. To mention some things implied in the words.

II. Endeavour to point out some things which persons are to give up with, and turn their backs upon, in their matching with Christ, and abiding by him.

III. Enquire how persons are to give up with these things.

IV. Give the reasons of the doctrine.

V. Make some improvement of the whole ; and
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all was proposed as the Lord should be pleased to direct.

Having spoke to the two first things in the method formerly, we now proceed to the *third*, which was,

III. To enquire how persons, in their matching with Christ, and abiding by him, are to give up with whatever is offensive to him. And here it may be observed, before speaking directly to this head, That those who are really brought to comply with the call in the text, do not give up with, or get rid of every thing inconsistent with their duty to Christ, immediately upon their being determined to close the match with him. To do so, is the duty of all who are espoused to Christ; but this is the attainment of none absolutely, while at home in the body. If any apprehend that they are espoused to Christ, and say, they have *no sin*, it is a sufficient evidence that they are yet strangers both to themselves and Christ, 1 John i. 8. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." The soul that is really espoused to the Son of God, will find work in putting off the *old*, and putting on the *new man*, while he sojourns in Mesech, and dwells in the tents of Kedar. For though the good work is begun in the sinner's heart, upon his being united to Christ in his regeneration and effectual calling, Philem. i. 6. it is not to be fully performed until the day of Jesus Christ. It is indeed true, in the case of every person who is blessed with vital union to Christ the true vine, and ingrafted in the green fir-tree, that his old things are passed away, and that all things are become new with him, 2 Cor. v. 17. But these old things are only done away in part, so that the saving change is still but imperfect

fect in respect of degrees. The believer still finds a law, that when he would do good, evil is present with him, Rom vii. 21. "For, there is not a just man upon the earth that doth good and sinneth not."

These things observed, we shall now endeavour to shew, how persons, espoused to Christ, ought, and through grace, really do give up with, and turn their backs upon whatever is offensive to him; and a hindrance to them in the way of their duty. And,

1. As persons are, upon their espousals to Christ, delivered from the curse of the broken law, the guilt of sin, and the reigning power and dominion of it, so they give up with every thing inconsistent with their duty to Christ, absolutely and universally, in respect of desire and endeavour. Though the believer cannot get altogether rid of the body of sin and death while he is in this world, it is nevertheless what he is longing after complete deliverance from, Rom. vii. 24. Some think that the Apostle, when expressing his earnest desire to be delivered from the remaining corruption of his heart, (which he calls *the body of this death*,) is referring to a barbarous custom which obtained among some of the heathens, of binding a dead body to a living man, who had been a capital offender, that he might be punished day and night, both by the burden, and the nauseous smell of it. Whatever may be in this, it is certain, that remaining sin in the hearts of the children and people of God, is their most intolerable burden; it is an adversary ever at their hand, and which has a remaining interest in every faculty of their souls, and so they are daily endeavouring to mortify the deeds of it through the Spirit. Once that the principle of grace is implanted in the heart, the corruption that

that is there, dwells no longer in a quiet habitation. For as the flesh, or the remainders of corruption in the heart, lusteth against the Spirit ; so the Spirit, or renewed part of the believer, lusteth against the flesh, Gal. v. 17. It longs for the destruction of remaining sin, and complete victory over it ; for though the believer finds in his sad experience, that the remaining corruption of his heart works powerfully by unbelief, yet having faith as his privilege, he has unbelief for his burden, Mark ix. 24. And although he finds a woful bias in his heart to the law as a covenant, and even after he has got legality in some measure banished from his understanding, he finds it sadly working in his affections, and insinuating itself into his religious duties and exercises, to the dishonour of God, and the marring of his own peace and comfort : He has, at the same time, a prevailing desire to be delivered from it, and to have no confidence in the flesh, resolving to maintain his claim to the righteousness of his glorious Head and Husband, as the sole ground of his acceptance with God, saying as in Psal. lxxi. 16. " I will go in the strength of the " Lord God : I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only."

2. The espoused Bride of Christ is to *give up with her own people, and her father's house*, with spiritual boldness, courage and resolution, Matth. xi. 12. " The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, " and the violent take it by force ;" or as some render the words, The violent take it by thrusting through. They who really desire to enter in at the strait gate, *must strive*, Luke xiii. 24. which says, that there are many obstacles in the way. The man himself is naturally backward to enter in at the strait gate, and to keep the narrow way that leads to life ; Satan uses all his influence, to de-

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tain men in his family and service, as did Pharaoh in the case of Israel. The world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, with whatever else, is not of God, but of the world, conspire together to oppose the spiritual marriage between Christ and the souls of men; so that none can turn their backs upon their father's house, and keep the way that leads to eternal life and happiness, but under the conduct of divine power, and in the exercise of a bold and courageous faith. In the day of the Redeemer's armies, men are determined to leave spiritual Egypt, as Moses did the literal, Heb. xi. 27. "By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured as seeing him who is invisible."

3. and lastly, In closing with Christ and abiding by him, all his rivals and competitors are to be given up with, for good and all, with full purpose and resolution of heart, never to return to them again, Luke ix. 62. "No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." The soul's espousal to Christ, is for ever, Hosea ii. 19. They who come to Christ, and would give evidence that they have done so in reality, must abide with him. There are many, who, in appearance, turn their backs upon spiritual Egypt, and follow Christ for a while, but when they begin to meet with difficulties in the way of abiding by him, then they compliment with him, as Orpha did with her mother-in-law, and so take their leave of him, and turn again to their father's house, and their own people. But those who really comply with the exhortation in the text, abide by a God in Christ, whatever trials they may be trysted with for his sake, Rev. xiv. 4. "These are they that follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth." A time of general apostacy from Christ,

and the truth as it is in him, is a season wherein his true friends do manifest their interest in him and relation to him; as we see John vi. 38. "Many of Christ's disciples turned their backs on him, and walked no more with him." And though he knew the twelve would not leave him, yet to give them an opportunity of evidencing their friendship to him in that day of backsliding, he said unto them, *Will ye also go away? Simon Peter, in name of the rest, faith, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life.* The language of every man and woman, whose heart the Lord touches, and determines to give the hand to Christ, is much of the same import with that of Ruth to Naomi, whatever temptations they may labour under to the contrary, Ruth i. 16. "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: For whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God."

IV. The *fourth* thing in the method was, to give the reasons of the doctrine. Whence is it then, that it is the indispensable duty of all, and especially of those who are espoused to Christ, to turn their backs upon, and give up with whatever is offensive to him, and an hindrance to them in the way of their duty to him? And,

1. This is the will of his and our heavenly Father, *Hearken, O daughter, says he, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget thine own people, and thy father's house.* It is the declared will and express commandment of God, that all men to whom the gospel comes, do put a bill of divorce in the hand of their former lords and lovers, and embrace his Son by faith: Hence faith he, Psal. ii. 12. "Kiss the Son lest he be angry." Embrace him in the arms of faith and love. Christ invites sinners

ners to come to him, abide with him, and to enjoy rest to their souls, Matth. xi. 28. And the Father calls them to hear him, Matth. xvii. 5. "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him."

2. Because he is worthy of their highest esteem and regard; *worthy is the Lamb that was slain*. His worth and excellency is altogether ineffable; saints and angels give their joint testimony that he is worthy; but what his real worth and excellency is, they do not pretend to say. He is the enriching pearl: Whatever persons may seem to lose for Christ, when once they find him, they find all that they need for time and eternity in him; his *riches are unsearchable*, Ephes. iii. 8. O what a happy change does the man make, who is determined to *forget his own people and his father's house*, and give heart and hand to Christ? There is no counting his riches: There is no declaring his blessedness. He comes from poverty to riches; from the *husks* which the swine of Satan eat, to feed on the *finest of the wheat*, and *honey from the rock*, Psal. lxxxix. 16. From being a slave to Satan and his own lusts, he comes to the enjoyment of a glorious liberty; not only from the curse of the law, and the power and dominion of sin, but he comes also to have liberty and freedom to serve God in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter, being a fellow-citizen with the saints, and of the household of God. And whereas his fellowship was formerly with Satan, and the unfruitful works of darkness, now it is with the *Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ*.

3. It is according to the terms of the marriage-contract, that those espoused to Christ, give up with all their former connections, in so far as they would stand in the way of their duty to him:

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Hence says he, Hof. iii. 3. "Thou shalt abide for me many days : Thou shalt not play the harlot, and thou shalt not be for another man ; so will I also be for thee." When a woman gives herself in marriage to an husband, if she means to act dutifully toward him, she will be disposed to conform to the customs and practices of the family into which she is brought, in so far as they are not sinful, that she may please her husband : And so when a soul is espoused to Christ, former connections are given up with ; self-wisdom, self-righteousness, and self-will, are renounced, and the man is powerfully, though kindly determined to say with the Psalmist, Psal. vi. 8. "Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity." When the man's former graceless companions would draw him back to his wonted sinful course, he must tell them, that he has opened his mouth to the Lord, and he cannot go back. He must not be ashamed to tell them, he hates the work of those who turn aside from his God, purposing, through grace, that whatever others do, he will serve the Lord.

4. and *lastly*, The person who is espoused to Christ, is under the most endearing obligations to give up with every thing inconsistent with a dutiful subjection to him : That the children of God may serve him without a slavish fear, in *holiness and righteousness, all the days of their life*, is the great end of their deliverance out of the hands of their spiritual enemies, Luke i. 74. Christ gave himself for his people, *that he might redeem them from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works*, Tit. ii. 14. They are redeemed from a vain conversation, by the *precious blood of the Son of God*, 1 Pet. i. 18. And whatever relation any may pretend to Christ, they can never evidence to their own consciences, nor to the

the world, that they are really espoused to him, without making it their daily endeavour from the heart, to comply with the loving call and invitation in the text, "Hearken, O daughter, and consider, "and incline thine ear; forget also thine own "people, and thy father's house." For these words are to be considered, as expressive both of the exercise of all true believers in their closing with Christ, and of what they really are brought to by the powerful working of the holy Ghost in the day of their regeneration and effectual calling; and also of the duty which they are endeavouring to comply with more perfectly, in the whole course of their lives, as the necessary effect of faith in Christ, and love to a three-one God in him.

V. The *fifth* thing in the method was, to improve the doctrine; and having done so formerly in an use of information, we may,

2. Lay a few things before you for trial and examination. Have you really been determined to comply with the duty enjoined in the text? If so,

(1.) We think you have seen the miserable condition you were once in, as children of the first Adam. The great reason why so many hang about the house of the first covenant, looking for life and salvation by the works of the law, is, that they do not perceive what a dreadful condition they are in. They who desire to be under the law, do not hear it, Gal. iv. 21. If you have fled unto Christ for refuge, then you have given up with the law as a Covenant of Works, and betaken yourselves to the Covenant of Grace and promise, as your strong hold and place of safety. You have seen there is no inheritance for you in the house of the first Covenant, but the *wrath to come*,

come, as the just demerit of your sin in Adam, and in your own persons.

(2.) You have seen that you had neither will nor power to disintangle yourselves from your own people, and your father's house : You have seen, that the arm of Omnipotence alone, was able to break your league with hell, and your agreement with death. And you have experienced the power of that arm, accompanying the external call of the gospel, drawing you from the horrible pit, and miry clay of a natural state. It requires no less power to draw a sinner out of the family of Satan, than it did to bring our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, again from the dead ; as the Apostle intimates to the Ephesians, chap. i. 19, 20. where he prays that they might have the real experience on their own souls, of the exceeding greatness of the Divine power toward all those who believe, " according to the working of his " mighty power ; which he wrought in Christ, " when he raised him from the dead, and set him " at his own right hand in the heavenly places."

(3.) How do ye stand affected to the family of God ? If you are really of the household of faith, the Father of the family is very precious to you ; you have other thoughts and meditations upon the several persons of the adorable Trinity, than you ever had any experience of in your first father's house, and among your own people ; you admire the electing love of the Father, the dying love of the Son, and that pleasant work of the Spirit of all grace that consists in his glorifying Christ, by taking of his and giving it to you, John xvi. 14. and you are much in prayer, that you may grow in the experimental knowledge of the Spirit's saving and sanctifying work upon your hearts. You love the laws of the house, and the harder that they bear upon

upon your corruptions, you love them the more, delighting in them after the inward man. You love the provision of God's family, and delight in the company and society of your new relations.

(4.) How do you stand affected to the world? Would you desire to be pleased with Agur's portion of it? Prov. xxx. 8. Such a portion of the good things of this life, as that you may not be retarded in your spiritual journey, through the want of what is really needful, nor yet be pressed down under the weight of it. Do you see the world to be an enemy to your souls, and over which you cannot have the victory, but by faith? They who never saw the present world in the light of an enemy to their souls, it is a sad sign they are not yet morally separated from their own people.

(5.) Are you grieved on account of the dishonours you see done to your Husband in the world? Alas! there are few but are very sensible of every thing that strikes at their own character and reputation in the world; but few, very few, seem to be sensibly touched with the dishonours done to Christ. Though his truths be opposed, his Sabbaths profaned, and his royal authority trampled under foot; the greater part of the generation among whom we live, give sad evidence that they *care for none of these things*; if they can find means to promote their own carnal interests, they seek no further; and this is a sad evidence, that they have not forgotten their father's house, and their own people. A loving wife is more displeased at the dishonours done to her husband, than the indignities done to herself. And those who are really espoused to Christ, as they are chiefly grieved at the remaining enmity of their own hearts against him, and the discoveries it too frequently makes of itself in their life and practice; so the reproaches which they see cast

cast at Christ, and the way of godliness, are, (when they are suitably exercised,) as a sword in their bones.

(6.) Are you really concerned to comply with that exhortation you have, Heb. xii. 1. "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us." Is there no weight that tends to bear you down in the Christian journey, but what you desire to lay aside? Are you endeavouring daily, through the Spirit, to mortify the deeds of the body? Are you spiritually minded? And is the remaining carnality of your hearts your burden? And, in a word, are you thankful to God for bringing you from among your own people? And are you concerned for those you have left behind you? If you are really among the number of those who have been determined to comply with the gracious call, to leave their father's house and their own people, you are affected with the deplorable condition of those who have hitherto given the deaf ear to it; and as you have occasion, your advice to them is the same on the matter with that of Lot to his sons-in-law, when he understood that judgment was ready to overtake them, Gen. xix. 14. "Up, get you out of this place; for God will destroy this city."

3. The *last* use of the doctrine shall be in a word of exhortation. And,

(1.) As to you who are delivered from your father's house, and morally separated from the world lying in wickedness, we exhort you to bless the Lord that ever you had such an invitation as the text contains tendered to you; that ever you were called to leave the family of Satan, and match with Christ; this is a distinguishing blessing, and such as he has not vouchsafed to fallen angels. Bless the

Lord.

Lord, that you were determined by the power of Divine grace, to comply with the invitation, which you would have rejected, as multitudes do, if you had been left to yourselves. We exhort you, now that you are brought out of the house of spiritual bondage, to improve your liberty in the service of your glorious Redeemer. Let it be your real endeavour to become more and more conform to the will of God with respect to the duty which he here lays before you, to *forget your own people and your father's house*; beware of looking back to the law for life, and listening to the temptations of Satan, and an insinuating world. "Be not ye conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds." We exhort you to live near your Husband. Let your souls follow hard after him, by the prayer of faith, and in the duty of meditation. Think on his loving-kindness to you. In love to your souls, he has not only delivered you from the pit of corruption, but he has even espoused you to himself. We exhort you to evidence your love to Christ, by being tenderly observant of all his commandments. Though you are free from the law as a covenant, yet you are still under it as the rule of your duty: And the relation in which you stand to Christ as your Lord, Redeemer, Head and Husband, lays you under the strongest obligations to evidence your union to him, by a tender regard to his authority expressed in his law. We exhort you to be active and zealous for the honour and glory of God, in your day and generation, and to beware of the detestable spirit of neutrality, that is so much prevailing at this day. Be concerned to act a faithful part to Christ, to yourselves, and to those among whom ye dwell. Be concerned to carry your testimony practically against the prevailing evils of the times; let your

conversation be tender and circumspect. And in your daily going out to duty and difficulty, while you take the precept of your royal Husband for your rule, depend upon his promise for your strength. For as you have righteousness in him for your justification, you have likewise strength in him for your sanctification, and also his gracious promise of enabling you to take the benefit of it, Isa. lv. 24. "Surely, shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength."

(2.) As for you who have never yet been determined to turn your backs upon spiritual Egypt, and embrace an offered Saviour, we exhort you to listen to the compassionate counsel which the Spirit of God gives you, while he is saying, "Hearken, O daughter, and consider: incline thine ear: forget also thine own people, and thy father's house." And for motive, consider,

[1.] Who is calling you to do so. The call comes forth to you from the highest authority, while it is at the same time, directed to you in the most endearing manner: He who is calling you, is the Former of all things, in whose hand are your life, and the length of your days. The one Law-giver, who has power to kill and to save alive. The glorious Person who calls you, is he against whom you have sinned; and it is a wonder of grace, that ever he sent such a call after any of your tribe and family.

[2.] Consider what you are called to forget, renounce and give up with, namely, *your father's house, and your own people*. You are called to come out from under the curse of the broken law, under which you are lying, in your father's house, and among your own people; you are under the law as a broken covenant, and so under the curse, Gal. iii. 9. The law is weak through the flesh, and so cannot

cannot give you life, but it is powerful to condemn you, because you have not continued in those things written therein, to do them. Oht consider, that it is a fearful thing to be under the curse of the law; for any to have the curse of the law executed upon them, is to be bound over to the revenging wrath of God on account of sin, until law and justice are completely satisfied for the offence committed against him, by violating his justice, and trampling his authority under foot. Who knows, or can fully conceive the power of his wrath, seeing he is omnipotent; never did any perfectly know it, but the glorious Surety. It is altogether unsupportable by any mere creature, and yet every man and woman, who lives and dies in the house of the old covenant, must eternally lie under it.

You are invited to leave the slavery of Satan, the god of this world. Every man while in his natural state, is Satan's drodge and slave; he is *lying among the pots*, Psal. lxxviii. 13. Hence says our Lord to the unbelieving Jews, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father you will do." Strangers to Christ are *children of disobedience*, and Satan rules in the hearts of all who are so. You are called to come away from the guilt of sin, which is binding you over to the wrath of God, and from the dominion and power of sin. The Apostle tells the believing Romans, that sin should never get the dominion over them; for, says he, *ye are not under the law, but under grace*, Rom. vi. 14. which words evidently imply, that every man, while he is under the broken covenant, is under the dominion of sin, *forming diverse lusts and pleasures, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind*. It is possible, you may think, that you are the only men who walk at liberty; and some of you may perhaps think, that a religious life

life is the worst of bondage ; but remember, " he that committeth sin, is the servant of sin," and dreadful is the yoke which he is under, however insensible he may be of it. And, as the yoke is heavy, so the wages is death: *for sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.* Moreover, when a gracious God, is calling you to forget your own people, and your father's house, he is inviting you to *fly from the wrath to come*: There is *wrath to come*, upon all the finally impenitent: " God will wound the head of his enemies, and the hairy scalp of him that goeth on still in his trespasses." And there is no possible way for you to escape his just displeasure, but in your being brought to comply with his gracious call, tendered to you in the gospel. Be intreated then to come under the covert of the blood and righteousness of God's dear Son. Kiss the Son lest he be angry; embrace him by faith, and so you shall escape from the storm of divine ire, to which you stand inevitably exposed, while you linger in your father's house. You are invited to come out from the world lying in wickedness, and be morally separated from the enemies of the glorious Bridegroom, that you be not one day made a sharer of their plagues. If you continue to partake with them in the sin of rejecting the Saviour, you must partake with them also in the awful though deserved punishment due to all your sins, and particularly to that of rejecting so great salvation.

Finally, Consider to what you are called to come; you are called to come to God, as your God and Father in Christ, 2 Cor. vi. 17, 18. It is in him the fatherless find mercy, Hos. xiv. 8. You are called to come to Christ, as your Kinsman-Redeemer, your Head and Husband. He is ready to spread the skirt of his garment over you, and make you to become

his:

S E R M O N XV.

The Beauty of the CHURCH desired by CHRIST; his Authority over her asserted, and her Duty to him enjoined.

PSAL. xlv. 11.

So shall the King greatly desire thy beauty: for he is thy Lord, and worship thou him.

IN the preceding verse of this psalm, the duty both of saints and sinners, is laid before them. As for the saints, being espoused to Christ, they are under every obligation to *forget their first father's house and their own people*, seek the honour and declarative glory of their heavenly Father, Head, and Husband, advanced, and the success and prosperity of the house, people, and family unto which they are brought, promoted. It is their duty to be daily putting off the old man, and putting on the new; dying to the law as a covenant of works, and to the love and practice of all these lusts, that war against their souls. And as to sinners, who are still under the curse of the law, and so in the family of Satan, it is their indispensable duty to fly from the house of the old covenant, before they are eternally buried in the ruins of it; embrace Christ by faith, and in that way come into the house of mercy, which Wisdom hath builded, and richly furnished for their reception and entertainment. This verse may then be considered, as containing motives to enforce the exhortation contained in the preceding: *So shall the King greatly desire thy beauty: for he is thy Lord, and worship thou him.*

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These words in general contain two motives, which JEHOVAH the Father lays before the Church, whom he considers as his daughter, being espoused to his Son, whom he here designs *the King*, as most encouraging arguments, to excite and stir her up to act dutifully toward her husband.

The *first* is the delight and complacency which the King her glorious Bridegroom, is pleased to take in all who are espoused unto him. *So shall the King greatly desire thy beauty.* As if he had said, "Forget thy father's house, and thine own people, and the King will be graciously pleased to take delight and satisfaction in that beauty and comeliness which he hath put upon thee: And that will most amply compensate for all the loss you may seem to have sustained by quitting your father's house, and your own people."

The *second* motive is taken from the relation Christ stands in to the Church, and the worship and homage which she owes unto him, arising from that relation. *He is thy Lord, and worship thou him.* Which words are not to be understood as containing the reason of the King's desiring her beauty, but as the reason of the exhortation contained in the preceding verse. It is, as if the Father had said, "O daughter, give up with all thy former lords and lovers, and in so doing, thou wilt be admitted to sweet fellowship and communion with the King as thine husband, and find him to be infinitely more to thee than all other beloveds. And as he alone is thy rightful Sovereign, Head and Husband, turn thy back upon all who would lay claim to any part of that homage which you owe to him as Lord of all, and your Lord in particular." We shall only observe further, for the explication of these words, that persons, their being brought to comply with the duty enjoined in verse 10th, is not to be con-

sidered

sidered as the procuring cause of Christ's taking delight in their beauty. For though it is not until persons are united to Christ, that he can love them with a love of complacency and delight, and though they cannot expect the uninterrupted enjoyment of his complacential love, but in the way of walking tenderly and circumspectly with him; yet no duty performed by the saint, more than by the sinner, can procure one smile of his countenance. The love of Christ, whether it act towards saints or sinners, is absolutely free and sovereign. From the words thus viewed, we may take the two following doctrinal observations:

Doct. 1. There is a real beauty and excellency in those who are espoused to Christ, wherein he is pleased greatly to delight.

Doct. 2. As Jesus Christ is Lord of all, and the Church's Lord in particular, so it is the duty of all, and particularly of his Church and people, to pay divine worship and homage unto him.

The first observation was, that there is a real beauty and excellency in those who are espoused unto Christ, wherein he is pleased greatly to delight. The doctrine is evident from the words; and we have Christ's own testimony to the truth of it, in his words to the Spouse, Cant. vii. 6. "How fair, and how pleasant art thou, (says he) O love, for delights!" See also, Isa. lxii. 5. "As the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee."

The method we shall observe in speaking to this doctrine, is,

I. To give some account of the believer's beauty.

II. Speak a little of that delight which our Lord Jesus is pleased to take in it.

III.

III. Make some practical improvement of the whole. And all is proposed under Divine aid and assistance.

I. The *first* thing proposed was, to give some account of the believer's beauty. And here we may observe in general, that whatever beauty and excellency the children and people of God have about them, it is all derived, and not natural. Our Lord Jesus first makes men beautiful, through his comeliness put upon them, and then he commends and takes pleasure in the works of his own hands, Ezek. xvi. 14. "Thy renown went forth among the Heathen, for thy beauty: For it was perfect through my comeliness which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord God." As the moon shines in light borrowed from the sun, so the Church, and every particular believer, shines in light and beauty derived from the Sun of righteousness, *the bright and the morning Star*. But more particularly,

(1.) The believer is beautiful, in regard that he is covered with the rich and ornamenting robe of the righteousness of his glorious Surety. He is *clothed with the garments of salvation*, Isa. lxi. 10. The true believer has put off his prison-garments, his filthy raiment, and is clothed with the embroidered robe of EMMANUEL's righteousness. He has been determined to put on the Lord Jesus by faith, Rom. xiii. 14. And having done so, he stands on an even place, and under a covering, whereby he is at once rendered beautiful in the eye of Justice, and effectually secured against the wrath to come. The believer being interested in Christ, as the *end of the law for righteousness* to him, Rom. x. 4. his beauty is as perfect in the sight of God, in respect of his state, as ever it is to be, though, in respect of his sanctification, he has

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many remaining blemishes while at home in the body.

(2.) The believer is beautiful, in respect of inherent holiness: For as he is under the robe of imputed righteousness, he is also *all glorious within*, by the working of the holy Spirit: He is regenerate, and born again of water and of the Spirit, John iii. 5. The old man of corruption is put off, and the new man is put on, Ephes. iv. 24. His old things are passed away, and all things are in part become new, 2 Cor. v. 17. The power of sin is broken in him by regenerating grace. He is renewed in the spirit of his mind, Rom. xii. 2. His understanding is enlightened in the knowledge of Christ and divine things; his will is rendered pliant to the will of his God, being sunk, as it were, in the Divine will, both of precept and providence. His affections, such as love, delight and desire, are drawn off from the vanities of a present world, and set upon a God in Christ as their proper object. Hence the Spouse is said, in respect of spiritual and heavenly affections, to *come up from the wilderness like pillars of smoke*, Cant. iii. 6. The believer having the saving and practical knowledge of the power of Christ's resurrection, his heart and affections ascend heavenward. And his conversation favours of the things of God.

3. The believer is fair and beautiful in respect of his outward conversation. Hence our Lord pronounces the feet of his bride beautiful; whereby we may understand her suitable walk and deportment in the world. "How beautiful (says he) are thy feet with shoes, O prince's daughter!" The truly godly do not talk and walk at random: *Honey and milk are under their tongue*, and they endeavour through grace, to set the Lord always before them, and to regulate every part of their conduct

conduct according to the rule of his word. Their speech is with grace seasoned with salt, and their conversation ordered. It is not according to the course of this world, that the believer conducts himself, but he has his eye upon him whom God hath given for a *Leader and Commander to the people*. He depends upon the Spirit of truth as his Guide, in the paths of righteousness, saying with the Psalmist, Psal. cxliii. 10. "Teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God : thy spirit is good, lead me unto the land of uprightness." When persons take no heed to their outward conversation, it is a sad sign, that whatever their professions may be, they know not the grace of God in truth ; for the tree is known by its fruits ; and if the fruit is naught, the tree is not made good by regenerating grace. And as a tender circumspect walk and conversation, is one special evidence of union with Christ, it is likewise amiable in his sight, as it is a shewing forth the praises or virtues of him, who hath called his people out of darkness into his marvellous light.

Should it be asked, What are some of the qualities of the believer's beauty ? We answer,

1. It is a derived beauty, as has been already noticed. There is no difference between one man and another, in respect of their spiritual condition, but what sovereign grace is pleased to make. The believer made not himself to differ from the unbeliever, nor has he any thing that he has not received, 1 Cor. iv. 7. You who are now justified and sanctified in the name of the Lord, and by the Spirit of our God, ye were once as the children of the Ethiopian, lying among the pots, the very scullions of Satan, vessels wherein there was no pleasure : And it is owing solely to the rich, free, and sovereign grace of God, that you now appear in his sight, *beautiful as Tirzah, and comely as Jerusalem.*

2. It

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2. It is real. There is a real beauty and excellency in the believer; he is *more excellent than his neighbour*. He asserts the believer is beautiful, who cannot be deceived, but who always judges of persons and things as they really are, Cant. iv. 1. "Behold, thou art fair, my love, behold thou art fair, thou hast doves eyes within thy locks: thy hair is like a flock of goats, that appear from mount Gilead." The judgment of Christ concerning his children, and the world's opinion of them, are very different. He pronounces them beautiful, because he knows he has made them so, through his comeliness put upon them. The men of the world see but little of their beauty; and what they see of it, is no beauty in their esteem. they are willing to consider it as hypocrisy at best, But it is matter of comfort to believers, that their best Friend will neither deny nor forsake the work of his own hands.

3. The believer's beauty is of a spiritual nature, his adorning is the hidden man of the heart, 1 Pet. iii. 4. He is *glorious within*, whereby he is distinguished from the hypocrite, who satisfies himself in having the outside of the cup and platter clean. The believer's beauty is the *beauty of holiness*, Psal. cx. 3. It is not manifest to a carnal world, the world knew not Christ, and it knows not those who are his; what the believer really is now, doth not appear, and much less does it yet appear what he shall be, when his true excellency shall be rendered conspicuous, 1 John iii. 2. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it does not yet appear what we shall be, but when he shall appear, we shall be like him: for we shall see him as he is." As if the Apostle had said, Beloved, even now, we enjoy the great honour of being the sons of God, and so of having his image stamped upon

us, which is a very wonderful and dignifying prerogative: "But how blessed and glorious we shall be hereafter, we are not capable to conceive; only this we know, which is enough for us, that when that blessed God and Saviour of ours shall appear, we shall be like him in glory: for we shall then enjoy the perfect, and beatifical vision of him, and shall therein be transformed into his likeness."

4. The believer's beauty is of a growing and increasing nature. After the good work is begun in him by the holy Ghost, in the day of regeneration, it is daily making progress, the believer is henceforward putting off the old man, which is deceitful, according to the corrupt lusts, and putting on the new. He is through the Spirit *mortifying the deeds of the body*, Rom. viii. 13. Hence *the path of the just*, or his advances in holiness, are compared to the *shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day*, Prov. iv. 18. Every new discovery that the believer gets of the King in his beauty, by the eye of faith, in the glass of his own word, adds to his spiritual beauty, and carries him forward to a further degree of likeness and conformity to Christ, 2 Cor. iii. 18. "We all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." Believers are *begotten by the word of truth*, James i. 18.; and it is by beholding a God of grace and love by faith in the promise, that they take in glory from him, in one degree after another, until they be fully changed into his glorious image, and made like unto him; which likeness to him, is wrought in and upon them by the Lord the Spirit.

5. *lastly*, The Lord Jesus will perfect the beauty of his Bride and Spouse in due time. The beauty of

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of a believer is perfect as to parts, in the day of regeneration, 2 Cor. v. 17.; and he that hath once begun the good work of beautifying a soul with salvation, will finish it, Phil. i. 6. For he is a rock and his work is perfect. "Christ loved the Church, "and gave himself for it: that he might sanctify "and cleanse it with the washing of water by the "word; that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any "such thing; but that it should be holy, and without blemish." The beauty of the believer in respect of his soul, is completed at his death, Heb. xii. 23.; and his beauty, in respect of the whole man, shall be made perfect in the day of the general resurrection, Phil. iii. 20, 21. Believers being then raised up to everlasting life, *shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars for ever and ever, in the kingdom of their Father.*

II. The *second* thing in the method, was to speak a little of that delight which our Lord Jesus is pleased to take in the beauty of his Church and people.

It may be enquired then, How does Christ evidence his desire of, and delight in the beauty of his beloved Spouse? We answer,

1. He does so by looking upon it with pleasure and delight. He beholds the upright with a pleasant countenance, Psal. xi. 17. We see with what pleasure he beheld the integrity of Nathanael, John i. 47. "Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and "saith of him, Behold, an Israelite, indeed, in "whom is no guile." And as he looks upon the beauty of his people with delight, so he is never more taken with it, than when they are entertaining the lowest thoughts of themselves, as we see in the case of the Spouse, when he saith to her, "Return, return, O Shulamite, that we (Father, Son, "and

“and holy Ghost) may look upon thee,” and she replies, “What will ye see in the Shulamite? as “it were the company of two armies.” Alas! would she say, what is to be seen in me, that you are so desirous to behold? I discern nothing in myself, but such confusion and disorder, through indwelling sin and corruption, as readily takes place upon the meeting of two opposite armies. On that account, she was ashamed to lift up her face to her Beloved; but that was the time his heart was most ravished with her beauty.

2. He does so by commending it, as we see in the case of Job, chap. i. 8. “The Lord said unto “Satan, hast thou considered my servant Job, “that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, “and escheweth evil?” And to the Spouse he saith, “O my dove that art in the clefts of the “rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see “thy countenance, let me hear thy voice: For “sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely,” Cant. ii. 14. In the first of these texts, our Lord asserts both the internal and external beauty of Job, against the false surmises of the accuser of the saints, who was disposed to traduce his servant as an hypocrite. And in the other, he directs the commendation to the Spouse herself, for her encouragement, under the many trials to which she was exposed, both from her mother’s children, and the heathen around her. Many and endearing are the commendations which Christ gives to his Bride and Spouse, particularly in the book of Canticles; and indeed the whole of it may be considered as an interchangeable commendation, wherein the glorious Bridegroom, and his highly dignified Bride, mutually commend the beauty of each other.

3. Christ evidences great delight in the beauty of his people, by keeping company with them, and admitting them to the enjoyment of sweet fellowship and communion with himself. He brings them into the banqueting house, where he sups with them, and they with him, Rev. iii. 20. When he comes into the garden of the Church, or of the hearts of his people in the day of renewed manifestation, then he and they have a mutual feast upon the provision which he brings along with him, Cant. v. 1. Our Lord Jesus admits his people to fellowship with him in public ordinances, Psal. lxiii. 2. and in the private and secret duties of religion. The duty of secret prayer is, in a special manner, a mount of communion with him, where they frequently enjoy their spiritual transfigurations.

4. He evidences the pleasure and delight which he takes in the beauty of his people, by letting them into the knowledge of these things which are hid from the men of the world, Psal. xxv. 14. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant." He keeps back nothing from them, the knowledge of which is really profitable for them: Hence says he to the disciples, "In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you." Believers are not only the servants, but the friends, yea the children of Christ, and they are admitted into their Father's secrets: Hence says he to the Disciples, John xv. 15. "Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth; but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you." He gives his friends to know the mysteries of the kingdom, and reveals these things to his babes, which he hideth from the wise and prudent.

5. He

5. He evidences his delight and complacency in the beauty of his people, by the many endearing characters and designations which he gives them; such as, his Sister, his Spouse, his Love, his Dove, his Undeified, &c. He designs them his jewels, Mal. iii. 17. to intimate both the delight he takes in them, and the watchful care he exercises about them, for their safety and preservation. The believer is married to Christ, and therefore delighted in by him, Isa. lxii. 4. "Thou shalt be called "Hephzi-bah, and thy land Beulah; for the LORD "delighteth in thee."

6. He does so by the honourable services he employeth his people in. He, as it were, ornaments himself with them, Isa. lxii. 3. "Thou shalt also "be a crown of glory in the hand of the LORD, "and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God." He employs them in the honourable work of bearing witness for him, against Satan and a profane world, Isa. xliii. 10. They witness for all his truths, and against whatever is contrary thereto. They attend to the testimony of the Holy Ghost, which he exhibits concerning Christ in the word, and thereto they bear witness in their stations and callings. He, as the Captain of salvation, employs them in an honourable warfare against sin, Satan, and the world; and therein he makes them as his goodly horses in the battle, Zech. x. 3. "The "LORD of hosts hath visited his flock the house of "Judah, and hath made them as his goodly horse "in the battle." And says he to the Spouse, Cant. i. 9. "I have compared thee, O my love, "to a company of horses in Pharaoh's chariots."

Finally, Christ evidences his desire of, and delight in the beauty of his people, by intimating his will to the Father, that they may be admitted to be where he is, after they have served their genera-

tion according to his will in the present world, John xvii. 24. His delights were with his people from eternity, Prov. viii. 30. And in the day of their regeneration, he makes them an habitation for himself through the Spirit, and dwells in their hearts, Eph. iii. 17. But he does not only come and dwell graciously with them upon earth; but because he delights in them, and has his desire toward them, he will have them to dwell with him where he is; and because he has been pleased to make them the objects of his delight, he will have them brought to the eternal and uninterrupted enjoyment of that goodness, which *eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive.*

We now proceed to make some improvement of the subject, which was the *last* thing proposed in the method.

1. And the *first* use of the doctrine may be for information. And,

(1.) We may infer that man is by nature vile and loathsome in the sight of an holy God; he is not only guilty, and so liable to the divine wrath and displeasure; but he has lost the glorious and beautiful image of God that was instamped upon him in his first creation, by his fall in the first Adam. The crown is fallen from his head, his beauty is departed from him. His *gold is become dim, and his most fine gold is changed.* He is *all as an unclean thing, there is no beauty in him, why he should be desired; he is full of wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores,* Isa. i. 6. And while in that condition, he is not only exposed to wrath, but shut out also from all friendly intercourse and fellowship with God. Sinners cannot delight themselves in the Almighty, neither can a holy God take pleasure in fools.

(2.) Hence

(2.) Hence see, what it is that can render a man truly beautiful and comely in the sight of God; it is his being clothed with the righteousness of his Son, and his being made a partaker of the grace of his Spirit. It is not his putting on the best legal dress he can spin out of his own bowels, nor his putting on the most shining paint of hypocrisy; no, these things tend only to render him the more loathsome in the eye of the holy One of Israel. For though the sinner should take to himself nitre and much soap, his iniquity will stand marked before God, Jerem. ii. 22. until he is determined by faith, to betake himself to the Jordan of IMMANUEL's blood for cleansing. The blood of Jesus only, has worth and efficacy in it to cleanse from the leprosy of sin; and it is that alone, that hath a divine appointment on it for that end.

(3.) Hence see, how it is that any come actually to partake of the beauty of holiness, and that is, in their being espoused to Christ. There is no deriving that holiness of nature from Christ the second Adam, which we lost in the first, but in the way of faith's union to his person. It is in this way that the soul comes to be beautified with salvation, Ephes. ii. 8. "By grace are ye saved, through faith: And that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God." Many go about in a legal way, endeavouring to beautify themselves, by a righteousness of their own, in order to procure their welcome to Christ; but as all spiritual beauty and excellency is in him, and to be come by no where else but in him, so sinners can only partake of it in the way of embracing himself by faith.

(4.) Is our Lord Jesus pleased to take complacency and delight in the beauty of his people? Then we may see how careful and diligent they should be to become still more desirable in his eye, by growing

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growing in likeness and conformity to him. With
what care and diligence should they guard against
every thing that tends to cast a veil over their spi-
ritual beauty? It is true, and a most comfortable
truth it is, that the failings and short-comings of
the saints, do not invalidate their interest in Christ,
and the love of God in him, Rom. viii. 35. yet
it is as certain, that the untenderness which the
children of God are often chargeable with in their
walk and conversation, tends greatly to obstruct
the manifestations of the divine love to their souls,
and provokes the holy Spirit to suspend his testi-
mony to the truth and reality of their interest in
Christ; as is clear from the repeated charges which
the Spouse gives to the daughters of Jerusalem, not
to provoke her Beloved to depart from her. And
saith our Lord to his disciples, "If ye keep my
" commandments, ye shall abide in my love, even
" as I have kept my Father's commandments, and
" abide in his love," John xv. 10. and chap. xiv.
23. "Jesus saith to Judas, (not Iscariot) If a man
" love me, he will keep my words; and my Fa-
" ther will love him, and we will come unto him,
" and make our abode with him." These words are
not indeed to be understood as if the love of the saints
to God, and the regard they pay to his command-
ments, were to be considered as the procuring
causes, either of their interest in his love at first,
or their continuance in the enjoyment of it; but
they evidently point forth, that the more tender,
circumspect, and cautious the Christian is in his walk
and conversation, and the more observant he is of
the royal law of Christ as the rule of his duty,
the more uninterrupted, sweet and intimate is the
fellowship which he enjoys with a three-one God
in Christ.

(5.) Hence see, that believers in Christ need not

be much moved, on account of the disrespect and contempt which a carnal world is disposed to cast upon them. What although carnal men count them as the filth and offscouring of all things? load them with reproach, speaking evil of them, because they run not into the same excess of riot with them? What though they call them nice and precise, because they are not so complaisant as to cut the coat of their profession as it may best suit the times? Yea, what although, when they may perhaps be at some loss to fix a blot upon their outward conversation, they should be even so daring, as to usurp God's prerogative, and pretend to judge their hearts, by discerning them hypocrites? How easy may the people of God carry themselves amidst all this sort of treatment? What a light matter may it be for them to be judged of men, when he, according to whose judgment all must in a little either stand or fall, sees their beauty, approves of it, and takes delight in it?

Finally, We may see matter of reproof to all such as are instrumental in marring the beauty of the Church, whether by persecution, error in doctrine, neglect of discipline, or by perverting the exercise of it, or by the introduction of human inventions into the worship of God. All who are chargeable with these things, are doing what they can to render the Church undesirable to her glorious Head and Husband. Alas! How much is the beauty of the Church defaced at this day, and particularly in the lands of our nativity, from Zion: Her beauty, both of purity and power, is in a great measure departed, Sam. i. 6. And the glory is far removed from the sanctuary. We have been a long time favoured with the gospel in these lands; God has been at great pains with us; he built his house in these lands, particularly at our second reformation

formation from Popery, like a fair palace, in a degree of conformity to the pattern shewed in the mount of Divine revelation, perhaps exceeding what he has done in any nation since the early ages of Christianity. But, alas! when the great LORD of the vineyard had reason to look for fruit, has he not just cause to say, *wherefore brought it forth wild grapes?* We have brought forth the wild grapes of apostacy from once attained to reformation; covenant-violation, infidelity, pride and wantonness; cold-rifeness and indifferency about the things of Christ; and what is worst of all in our case, we are become secure and insensible, refusing to be reclaimed, either by mercies or judgments. And this is not the case merely with the unthinking part of the generation, but a slumbering disposition has seized many even of those, who, we have reason, in charity, to think, have the root of the matter in them, among the various denomination of Christians which obtain among us; and we have reason to lament, that even from those who have sisted themselves under the banner of a Testimony for attained to reformation, their former beauty of zeal for the glory of God, love to Christ, and one another in him, is in a great measure departing away.

II. The *second* use of the doctrine, may be for trial and examination. Are you possessed of that beauty that is amiable in the sight of Christ? If so, we think,

That you have seen your natural blackness and deformity; seen that you were all as an *unclean thing*, and that all *your righteousnesses are but as filthy rags*; if ever you saw yourselves in the glass of the holy law set before you by the Spirit, this must have been the case with you.

You have seen and felt an utter inability in yourselves

yourselves to acquire that beauty that is pleasing to Christ. There is indeed nothing more natural, than for a man when he is first made sensible of his guilt and pollution, to endeavour to work away his pollution and deformity, by setting himself to the performance of these duties wherein he sees he has been deficient, and lopping off some luxuriant branches of his sin and wickedness, expecting thereby to make amends for his past offences, and still the clamours of conscience. But if the Lord has been dealing savingly with your souls, he has brought you to see, that it was as impossible for you in your natural state, to perform any thing good and acceptable to God, as it is for the *Ethiopian to change his skin, and the Leopard his spots*, Jer. xiii. 23. He has shewed you your righteousness and your works, that they could not profit you in the matter of your acceptance with God.

But again, If you are partakers of this beauty that is so desirable to Christ, then your remaining sin and deformity is your burden: You will sensibly feel, and often bewail the remaining unbelief, legality, hardness of heart, earthliness of affection, want of love to Christ, and of a becoming concern for the advancement of his glory that still hangs about you: It will be matter of grief to you, that, though you find a principle in you, taking part with your Beloved against all his enemies, that yet you, at the same time, experience a strong opposition in your hearts to all that is spiritually good. In a word, if you are blessed with the begun participation of spiritual beauty, it is your real concern to have it increased and perfected. You are sensible there is much lacking in it: You count not yourselves to have attained, so as to be already perfect; and therefore, with the Apostle, Philip. iii. 13. "Forgetting the things which are behind, and
"reaching

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“reaching forth to those things which are before,
“you are pressing toward the mark, for the prize
“of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”

The *last* use of the doctrine may be for exhortation. And,

First, As to you who are the children and people of God, and whom he has begun to beautify with his salvation, we exhort you,

1. To bless the Lord for his goodness to you; for his works of wonder done, both for you and in you; though you were once lying among the pots, yet mercy has lifted you up. You now appear in the sight of an holy God, as if you had not been cast off. He has covered you with the robe of righteousness, and the garments of salvation, so that, in respect of your state, you are without spot before him. And, though your inward beauty is not yet perfect, your salvation is nearer than when you first believed; and you may be *confident of this very thing, that he who hath begun a good work in you will finish it until the day of Jesus Christ*, Phil. i. 6. Whatever opposition it may meet with from within, or from without, he will make it perfect. He will work and none shall let it.

2. We exhort you to be upon your guard against every thing that tends to stain your beauty. *Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation.* “Be

“not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds, that you
“may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and
“perfect will of God, even your sanctification.”

Let your conversation be ordered according to the rule of the Lord’s word; and be constantly on your watch against sin in general, and particularly those sins that are against light and conscience, which the Psalmist calls presumptuous sins, Psal. xix. 13.

There may be some sins also, to which you may have

have stronger temptations than to others, arising from your natural tempers and dispositions, your stations and employments in the world, and the company with which you are in Providence connected; these you must strive against with unremitting care and diligence, as ever you would preserve your spiritual beauty, and enjoy the sweet and comfortable evidences of your Husband's love to you.

3. We exhort you to make a daily improvement of the blood of Jesus by faith. It was from the effectual application of this precious blood to your hearts and consciences, that your spiritual beauty took its beginning: And it is by a believing improvement of it, that it is promoted now, and shall be perfected in due time. The laver of the Redeemer's blood stands open, both for the washing of those who are altogether covered over with the leprosy of sin, and also for the removing of the remaining filth and pollution of believers. Hence saith the Apostle, 1 John i. 7. "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." You are purged from the guilt of sin, by the merit of your Husband's blood, and the power of sin is broken in you by the *washing of regeneration*, but you still need to be washed by the *renewing of the holy Ghost*.

Secondly, As for you who are yet lying under the guilt, power and pollution of sin, we exhort and beseech you, to bethink yourselves, and to lay to heart the woful state and condition you are in. You are dead in trespasses and sins, lying under the curse of the broken law, and exposed unto the wrath to come. You are loathsome and abominable in the sight of an holy God; and it is your own sin and folly, that has made you so. *God made man*

upright, and his sin and misery are the bitter fruits of his own invention. You are in the family of Satan, and your fellowship is with him, and the unfruitful works of darkness. And if you finally persist in your present sinful course, your portion will be with the devil and his angels, in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone for ever and ever. You will be led forth with the workers of iniquity, when peace shall be upon Israel.

We exhort you to consider, that however deplorable your present state and condition is, there is *hope in Israel* concerning you; the fountain of the Redeemer's blood is opened to you in the dispensation of the gospel. And many a sinner as guilty and filthy as you are, have got their robes washed and made white in it, and are now before the throne of God and the Lamb, Rev. vii. 14. And its efficacy is still the same to cleanse you, and you are as welcome to it as ever they were. A God of infinite love and grace is willing to make you clean; willing to set you free, both from the guilt and pollution of sin. Hear what he is saying to you, Isa. i. 18. "Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Though your sins be red and bloody, great and heinous, they shall be washed and purged by the blood that is shed for the remission of the sins of many. There is worth and value in it for that purpose, and God is telling you, that he is ready to apply it by his Spirit to you, for your cleansing. The expressions of making *sin white as snow and wool* are metonymical, as sins are said to be purged, when men are purged from their sins, Heb. i. 3. Sin can never change its colour, but, thanks be to God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, the sinner can be
purged

purged from it; and being so, he is whiter than the snow, Psal. li. 17. And how this comes to be the case, you are told, Ezek. xxxvi. 25. "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean, from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you." Having therefore these, and many like precious promises given unto you, that by them ye may be made partakers of a divine nature, be concerned to lay claim to them by faith. Look to him who hath given you the promise of justification, sanctification, grace and glory; that he may give you faith, in the behalf of Christ, to believe it; judging the Promiser faithful. You have an encouraging word to this purpose, Psal. cx. 3. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauty of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth." These words may be viewed, as the Father's promise to Christ, bearing, that though all his spiritual seed are by nature dead in trespasses and sin, yet that should not stand in the way of their coming to him at the time appointed in the gracious purpose of God: Because, upon the footing of what his Son has done for them, as their Surety, and in their room and stead, he would send forth his quickening Spirit, to accompany the word of the gospel, whereby they should be made both able and willing to embrace Christ "as made of God to them, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption." Take the promise to a throne of grace then, and plead the accomplishment of it to each of you in particular, that you may be powerfully determined to give up with the service of sin and Satan, and present yourselves as free-will offerings unto Christ, for this is your reasonable service. Beware of staying away from Christ, with a design to beautify yourselves by your own legal

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gal endeavours, hoping thereby to ingratiate yourselves in the divine favour. For you to entertain a hope of this kind, is a saying upon the matter, that you want to be clean before you come to the fountain, and whole before you apply to the physician. It is your immediate duty, to embrace Christ by faith, as the propitiation for your sins, and in him you will find both the remission of sin, and the spirit of holiness; and thus be made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light, the house not made with hands, and whereinto no unclean thing can enter.

S E R M O N XVI.

PSAL. xlv. 11.

So shall the King greatly desire thy beauty: for he is thy Lord, and worship thou him.

[The Second Sermon on the Text.]

THE second doctrine from this text, was, Doct. That as Jesus Christ is Lord of all, and the Church's Lord in particular; so it is the indispensable duty of all, and particularly of his Church and people, to pay divine worship and homage unto him.

In speaking to this doctrine, we shall observe the following method, which is,

I. To mention some things imported in the designation the Father here gives to Christ, when he saith to the Church, *he is thy Lord.*

II. To enquire in what respects Jesus Christ may be said to be Lord of the Church.

III.

III. To speak a little of that worship and homage which the Church owes to Christ, as her Lord; and then,

IV. To subjoin a short improvement. And all is proposed as the Lord may be pleased to assist and direct.

I. The first thing proposed, was to mention some things imported in the designation which the Father here gives to Christ, when he saith to the Church, *he is thy Lord*. And,

1. This designation implies, that there is a mutual relation between Christ and the Church: He is her Lord, and she his servant. He is her King, and she his subject. He is her Head, and she his members. He is her Husband, and she his spouse. He is the Shepherd, and his Church and people are the sheep of his pasture. He is the Prince, and they are the people. He is the Root, they the branches. He is the Foundation, and his people are the lively stones built together upon it, for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

2. It implies his eminency in the Church. Whatever persons come into it, he alone is Lord and Sovereign there. The greatest princes and potentates of the earth, are but subjects in the kingdom of Christ. They come into it, to receive, and not to give laws, Isa. lii. 15. "Kings shall shut their mouths at him: for that which hath not been told them, shall they see: and that which they had not heard, shall they consider." He is *as the apple-tree among the trees of the wood*, in the paradise of God. *He is the bright and the morning star*, the chiefest among all the ten thousands in spiritual Israel.

3. It implies his sovereign power and authority in and over the Church. He is the sole Lawgiver to

to the Church, as she acknowledges, Isa. xxxiii. 22. "The Lord is our Lawgiver, he is our King, and "he will save us." He is the great Speaker in the Church, to whom alone she owes the hearing of faith, Matth. xvii. 5. He has the power of life and death in his hand, and all judgment is committed unto him by the Father, John v. 22. Yea, so large and extensive is his dominion, that it reaches to heaven, earth, and hell, Rev. i. 18. The sovereign dominion over all things, in the kingdoms of providence, grace, and glory, is lodged with him, as he tells his disciples, Matth. xxviii. 18. So that he has not only power and authority to rule and manage all things in the Church for his glory, and her spiritual advantage, but also to restrain, overrule, and, in due time, destroy all the opposition that can arise from hell and earth, to his finishing the mystery of God in the Church.

4. It implies, that it is the indispensable duty of the Church, and every particular member thereof, to yield cheerful and ready obedience to the will of Christ, in whatever he is pleased to command. His subjects are to learn his will from his word: And his royal pleasure, when once known, is not to be disputed; his laws bind the conscience, and an implicit and unlimited obedience is due to him from all his subjects, and to none else. He is the only Lord of the conscience, so that although Christians are to be subject to the powers that are of God, in things lawful; if the commandments of men are at any time contrary to the royal law of Christ, they are to be set aside, Acts iv. 19. And while the subjects of Christ are to subject their consciences to all his commandments without reserve, it is their unspeakable comfort, that they are not grievous, for his yoke is lined with love, and his burden easy, which are encouraging motives

tives to take them on, Matth. xi. 30. There is nothing that he calls for from his subjects, in the way of duty, but he furnishes them with grace and strength for the acceptable performance of it, 2 Cor. xii. 9. So that however weak and insufficient they are, in themselves considered, for the performance of any thing that is good, yet through their Lord strengthening them, they can do all things.

5. The designation implies, that our Lord Jesus has the burden and care of the Church lying wholly upon him. The Lord of the family has the burden of whatever concerns his family, lying upon him. Accordingly, the Church and all her concerns, are said to hang upon Christ, as her Lord, Isa. xxiii. 23, 24. "I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place, (saith God the Father) and they shall hang upon him all the glory of his Father's house, the offspring and the issue, all vessels of small quantity, from the vessels of cups, even to all the vessels of flagons." Our Lord Jesus had the burden of purchasing the Church, which he did *with his own precious blood*, Acts xx. 28. and he has the burden of ruling the Church, and defending her from all her enemies. In one word, he has the onerous burden of bringing the many sons unto the rest that remains for the people of God. He lays them upon the shoulder of his power, in the day of their conversion, and never lays them off, till he brings them to the goodly mountain, which his right hand hath purchased for them.

6. and *lastly*, This designation given to Christ, with the duty called for from the Church to him, implies, that he is God equal with the Father and holy Spirit. *He is thy Lord*, saith the Father to the Church, *and worship thou him*. To give divine worship and homage to any other than God, is a sin which he threatens to punish in the most awful manner,

manner, so that the call here given to the Church, to worship our Lord Jesus, is the most undeniable proof and evidence, that he is God. Yea, so much is the heart of a holy God set upon excluding all rivals and competitors, from any, the least share, in the prerogative of Deity, of which divine worship is in a special manner one; that he takes one of his names from his jealousy in this matter, *Exod. xxxiv. 14.* "Thou shalt worship no other God; for the Lord whose name is jealous, is a jealous God." So that when the Father saith to the Church, concerning Christ, *He is thy Lord, and worship thou him,* it is fairly implied, that her Husband is no mere man, but EMMANUEL, God and man, in one Divine Person, and therefore may be worshipped and adored, without any violation of that known and immutable precept, of worshipping God only.

II. The *second* thing in the method, was to enquire in what respects Jesus Christ may be called Lord of the Church. And,

1. He is so by the designation and appointment of God the Father, who saith concerning him, *Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion, Psal. ii. 6.* Jesus Christ is King in Zion; unto him the Lord God hath given the throne of his Father David, and established the kingdom over the spiritual Israel, in his hand for ever. And as he hath appointed him to this charge; so in order that he might be in case to carry it into execution, in the most effectual manner, he has given the kingdom of providence into his hand also, constituting and appointing him *Heir of all, Heb. i. 2.* and *Head over all things unto the Church, Eph. i. 22, 23.* It is of this power, lordship and dominion, that our Lord speaks, when he saith to the Father, *John xvii. 2.* "Thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should

"give

"give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him."

2. He is the Church's Lord, in virtue of his own actual compliance with the Father's designation of him to that charge. He most cheerfully complied with the will and appointment of the Father, to take on him the whole burden and management of the Church, as her Prophet, Priest, and King, Psal. xl. 6, 7. When the Lord was pleased to lay the government of the Church upon his shoulder, he was *not rebellious, neither turned he away back*, Isa. l. 5. And as he was pleased to come into this relation to the Church, so he readily owned it, even when he saw the most awful scene of sufferings opening against him for so doing, John xviii. 37. "Pilate said unto him, Art thou a King? Jesus answered him, Thou sayest that I am a King. "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth." Our Lord Jesus came into the world, to bear witness to all the truths of God, and to this truth in a special manner, That he is *King in Zion*, by his Father's appointment, and his own voluntary undertaking.

3. Jesus Christ is the Church's Lord by purchase and conquest; he is her Lord-Redeemer, both by price and by power. He has purchased the Church at the costly price of his own *precious blood*, 1 Pet. i. 18. And having delivered her from under the curse of the broken law, by making complete satisfaction to the justice of God for all her offences; he redeems her out of the hand of Satan, by the arm of his power, in the day of conversion, Luke xii. 21, 22. Satan as a strong man, and a strong man armed, has the possession of the heart of every natural man as his palace; and he keeps the *goods at ease*, that is, the sinner himself,

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with

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with all the influence he can use for promoting
the kingdom of darkness under the power of Sa-
tan; until Christ *the stronger man comes upon him,*
takes from him his armour wherein he trusted, and
divides his spoils; in taking possession of the man's
heart by his Spirit, bringing him over to his fami-
ly and service; *that being delivered out of the hand*
of his spiritual enemies, he may serve the Lord Christ,
without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him
all the days of his life.

4. He is Lord in and over the Church, as he is
her Husband, and she his spouse. The whole vi-
sible Church is espoused to Christ, in respect of ex-
ternal covenant-relation, Jer. iii. 4. and every true
Church-member is really, savingly, and personally
espoused unto him, Hof. ii. 19. and, therefore, under
every obligation to love, reverence, and honour
him. If Sarah obeyed Abraham calling him Lord,
much more ought the Church to obey Christ, car-
rying herself toward him as her Lord. Christ is
such an Husband to the Church, as that he is, at
the same time, her great Lord and Master. The
match here is not betwixt equals, but betwixt the
Prince of life, the Lord of glory, and the captive
daughter of Zion, who is by nature a child of
wrath, and an heir of hell and condemnation.

5. He is Lord in and over the Church by her
own consent. Though the subjects of Christ are
naturally rebellious and as backward to take on
his yoke as others, yet he subdues them to himself in
the day of his armies; and in a powerful, though
kindly manner, he brings them to submit to the
sceptre of his grace. When he sends forth his
Spirit to accompany the word of the gospel among
a people, then is the saying accomplished, " One
" shall say, I am the Lord's; and another shall call
" himself by the name of Jacob; and another
" shall

“shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and
“surname himself by the name of Israel,” Isa.
xliv. 5. This is most evidently a promise of the
calling of the Gentiles; and is emphatically ex-
pressive of the open, public and solemn manner in
which they were to be brought to renounce those
dumb idols which they had been worshipping, and
profess their faith in, and subjection to a God in
Christ as their God. *One shall say, I am the Lord's*.
Once I was not so, in respect of any saving rela-
tion to him; but now I am: *And another shall call
himself by the name of Jacob*: He shall be an I-
sraelite indeed, and profess himself to be so: *And
another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord*:
In testimony of the sincerity of his heart in ma-
king this good confession, he shall subscribe with
his hand, *and surname himself by the name of
Israel*; that is, he shall reckon it his highest honour
to bear the Christian name, and to enjoy the pri-
vileges, and perform the duties which stand con-
nected therewith.

6. and *lastly*, Jesus Christ is Lord of the Church,
in as much as it is from him that she expects, and
is to enjoy the reward, when her service in this
world is accomplished. Then our Lord Jesus will
say to all his true subjects, *Well done good and
faithful servants, enter ye into the joy of your Lord*.
The great Apostle of the Gentiles speaks with
pleasure of this reward, as sure, not only to him
and other Apostles, and faithful ministers, but also
to all who love the appearance of Christ, 2 Thess.
iv. 7, 8. This reward is indeed a reward solely
of grace, and not of debt; a reward not for, but
according to our works: A reward, in the expec-
tation of which, the most eminent of the saints are
not to look to their works, but to the faithfulness
of God engaged in the promise. Hence saith the
Apostle

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Apostle to the Hebrews, chap. vi. 10. "God is
"not unrighteous to forget your work and labour
"of love, which ye have shewed toward his name,
"in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do
"minister." The good works of the subjects and
servants of Christ, do not go before them into hea-
ven, to procure their access thither; but they fol-
low them, as evidences of their union with, and
relation to Christ, Rev. xiv. 13. "Blessed are the
"dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth;
"yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from
"their labours, and their works do follow them."

III. The *third* thing in the method was, to
speak a little of that worship and homage which
the Church owes to Christ as her Lord: And
here,

I. We may make a few observations concerning
the object of Divine worship and adoration.

II. Mention some of the particular acts of wor-
ship, which the Church is called to perform to
Christ as her Lord.

It was proposed *first*, to make a few observati-
ons concerning the object of religious worship and
adoration. And,

1. We observe, that the object of all religious
worship is *one*. There is, and there can be but
one true God, who is the Creator of heaven and
earth, the first and the eternal being; the sove-
reign Disposer of all his works, the righteous Go-
vernor of all his rational creatures, and the alone
and proper object of all their worship, Deut. vi. 4.
"Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord."
And saith the Apostle, Gal. iii. 20. "God is one."
Eph. iv. 6, "One God and Father of all, who is
"above all." And saith the same Apostle, 1 Cor.
viii. 5, 6. "Though there be that are called gods,
"whether

“whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be
“gods many, and lords many) to us there is but
“one God.” Though there are many called gods in
Scripture besides the true God; yet wherever they
are so called, they are always designed so in such a
figurative and limited sense of the words, as that
none need be in danger of taking the creature for
the Creator, nor an idol for the living and true
God.

2. We observe, that though there is and can
be but one true God, there are three distinct Per-
sons in the Godhead; which three Persons are de-
signed the *Father*, the *Son*, and the *Holy Spirit*:
And though these words are to be used in a very
different sense from what they are when applied
to men, it evidently appears from Scripture, that
the word *Father* must signify one from whom the
Son derives his character of sonship, though not his
Divine nature or essence. As also, that the Son,
who is called *the only begotten of the Father*, must
be considered as related to the Father, in such a
manner as no other being is, or can be: He is
God's dear Son, by eternal and ineffable generation.
It is moreover evident from Scripture, that the
Holy Ghost, or third Person of the Godhead, who
is designed the *Holy Spirit*, (not only to denote his
spiritual nature and essential purity, but also his
glorious work in the œconomy of redemption,
which is to sanctify and make men holy) is related
to the Father and the Son, in the way of proceed-
ing eternally from both. That there are three
distinct Persons in the Godhead, though numeri-
cally one in nature and essence, is most evident,
both from the Old and New Testament, Psal.
xxxiii. 6. “By the word of the Lord were the
“heavens made, and all the hosts of them, by the
“breath of his mouth.” Here there are three di-
stinct

distinct Persons mentioned, *the Lord, the Word of the Lord, and the breath or Spirit of his mouth.* And saith the Apostle John, first of his Epistles, v. 7. "There are three who bear record in heaven, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one."

Finally, We observe, that divine worship is due and to be performed to each of these three glorious persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, according to the distinct characters assigned them in Scripture: And though it is most ordinary to direct our supplications to God in the person of the Father, yet divine worship may be performed to any of the adorable three immediately; while at the same time, we are carefully to bear in mind that we are worshipping the one true God in Christ, which ever of the Persons we address. Hence we find Stephen committing his departing soul into the hands of the Lord Jesus, saying to him, *Receive my spirit.* And the Spouse addresses herself immediately to God the Holy Ghost, saying, *Awake, O north wind, and come thou south, blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out.* In a word, it is to be remembred, that when any one of the three Persons is named in the acts of divine worship, the other two are included; so that when the Church is called to worship Christ as her Lord, she is not called to do it in the way of excluding the Father and Holy Spirit. But she is called to worship the three-one God in the person of Jesus Christ, eyeing his mediation as the alone ground of her access to, and acceptance with God.

These things being observed, we now proceed to mention some of the particular acts of worship which the Church is called to perform to Christ as her Lord, which was the second thing proposed on this head. And,

1. It is the indispensable duty of all who hear the gospel, to believe in Christ, trust in him, and rely upon him for eternal life and happiness, 1 John iii. 23. "This is his, (*viz.* the Father's) commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ." And saith our Lord to his disciples, John xiv. 1. "Ye believe in God, believe also in me." God hath given his Son to be *the confidence of the ends of the earth, and of those that are afar off upon the sea.* And it is matter of promise, that *in his name the Gentiles shall trust*, Rom. xv. 12. Faith is one of the highest acts of divine worship any can perform, and it is due to the glorious Person who is Zion's King and Lord.

2. Prayer and supplication is another act of worship which the Church and every particular member thereof owes to Christ. Stephen directed his prayer to him as observed before. Abraham made intercession to him in behalf of Sodom and Gomorrah, Gen. xviii. 23. The Apostle Paul made supplication to him, to take away the grievous temptation that galled him like a thorn in the flesh, 2 Cor. xii. 8. And saith that same Apostle, Rom. x. 13. "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord, shall be saved." Now, that the object of worship, of whom the Apostle there speaks, is the Lord Jesus, is clear both from the preceding and following contexts.

3. Praise and adoration, is an act of worship which we find ascribed to the Lord Christ in Scripture. Angels praise and adore him, Isa. vi. 3. compared with John xii. 41. All the creatures praise the name of Zion's mighty God: Hence saith John, "I heard every creature which is in heaven, and on earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto him that sitteth on the throne,

" throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever." God the Father hath promised that all the spiritual Israel shall praise Christ as their Lord, and praise him to the degree of glorying in him: Hence says he, Isa. xlv. 25. " In him shall all the seed of Israel " be justified, and shall glory."

4. Another part of divine worship due to the Lord Jesus, is that of swearing by, and to him. We find the Apostle Paul different times swearing by the name of Jesus, particularly in Rom. ix. 1. When he wished the Jews to be convinced of his love to them, and of the great grief and sorrow which he had on account of their rejecting Christ, and the gospel, which he saw was hastening on destruction upon the far greater part of them: He saith, " I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my " conscience also bearing me witness, in the Holy " Ghost." And as the subjects of Christ are to swear by his name, as the searcher of their hearts; so it is their duty to swear allegiance to him also, as their sovereign Lord and Master, when they are called to it in Providence. And it is matter of promise, that *to him the vow shall be performed*, Psal. lxxv. 1. And if the vow shall be performed to him, it must certainly first be made. We have many promises in the Old Testament, that religious vowing and swearing shall be performed to the Lord under the New, as you may see Isa. xix. 18. Jerem. l. 5. with many other texts that might be adduced. Some may indeed be ready to say, we cannot see the propriety of practising what you call the duty of public covenanting, unless you can point us out an express precept for it in the New Testament. But it may be answered as to this, That the objection carries more in it than the objectors are perhaps aware of. For if it has any weight in it at all, it strikes equally against the duty of baptizing infants, and

and observing the first day of the week as the Christian Sabbath; neither of these duties being enjoined by any express precept in the New Testament, at least in so many words. The Apostle Paul considered the promise of the gospel's being preached to the Gentile nations, as a sufficient warrant, yea as having the force of a precept for him to do it, Acts xiii. 46, 47. compared with Isa. xlix. 6. But this objection says that his warrant was not sufficient. Moreover, let it be observed, that whatever was duty under the Old Testament, and not typical, and so abolished, is still duty under the New; but it can never be made to appear, that an oath is a ceremonial thing, and so typical of something under the gospel. Our warrant then, for vowing and swearing to the Lord, is most evidently to be found in the first, second, and third precepts of the Moral Law: And all those exhortations which we have in the New Testament, to strive together for the faith or truth of the gospel; to hold fast the profession of our faith, and not to be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, or backward to confess him before men, &c. evidently amount to a call for us to avouch the Lord to be our God, in the most solemn and public manner, that time and circumstances may require. The duty of public covenanting, and vowing to Jacob's mighty God, hath been often performed in the Gentile church, as the fruit of ancient prophecies and promises that it should be so in gospel-days; and, among others, our fathers in these lands, were brought forward under the good hand of God, to give themselves, and us their posterity, to the Lord, in a covenant of duty and gratitude. And although, alas! the bulk of the generation wherein we live, are ashamed to own their dutiful allegiance to the most high God; yet, we make no doubt, but the performance of the

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duty of public vowing and covenanting will yet become more general. Our Lord Jesus has told us, Isa. xlv. 23. "that he hath sworn by himself, and that the word has gone out of his mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That to him every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall swear." And what the matter of the oath is, you see ver. 24th; *Surely shall one say, or, as some render the words, every tongue shall swear, saying, In the Lord have I righteousness and strength.* According to the matter of the oath contained in these words, and which are plainly taken into the Bond for renewing our Covenants, National and Solemn League; it appears most evident, that there is no just ground to allege, as many do, that covenanters engage to keep the divine law, in order to procure justification and salvation to themselves, by virtue of their obedience thereto: So far from it, that when this duty is gone about in a suitable manner, they do, and that in the most solemn manner, renounce their own righteousness, as being any the least ground of their justification before God; and their own strength, as being any way sufficient to support them in the practice of holiness; and take hold of the Lord Jesus by faith, as *made of God to them wisdom, righteousness and sanctification.* Moreover, as some tender Christians are afraid to engage in the duty of covenanting, because they think they will certainly fail in their duty; we may observe in one word here, that no person engages, or at least ought to engage perfectly to keep God's commandments, for this reason, that no man can do it: But every honest hearted covenantor, engages in the strength of new covenant grace, sincerely and faithfully to endeavour to yield obedience to the whole law, as the rule of his duty; and this is no more than every Christian is bound to do, whether

whether he ever acknowledge the obligation in that open and public manner, or not.

Finally, All divine ordinances are to be administered in the name of Jesus Christ, and with an immediate eye to his authority, as Zion's King and Lord. The gospel is to be preached in his name; the sacraments of Baptism and the Supper, administered in his name; prayer and praise are to be offered to God by Jesus Christ, Eph. v. 20.; office-bearers are to rule and govern the Church in his name, not by making laws for her, but by a ministerial explanation and application of the law given to her by her glorious Head. In inflicting the censures of the Church upon offenders, and removing them when the ends of inflicting them appear from scriptural evidences to be gained; all is to be done in his name, as King in Zion, and with an eye to his glory. And as Church-officers are to apply the censures of the Church to offenders in Christ's name, and by his authority; so it is their duty to submit thereto, in such a manner as they have reason to think will be approved by God, as acts of religious homage performed to him who is their Lord and King.

IV. The *fourth* head in the method was, to make some improvement. And,

1. This subject may be improved for information.

(1.) Hence see, that the Church is a highly dignified society. She has Jesus Christ for her Lord. God the Father hath given him to be her Head; and a *Head over all things* for her good, and spiritual advantage. Well may the Church be called the *perfection of beauty, and the joy of the whole earth*. Her King is *higher than Agag*, and she is greatly exalted. Having the *holy One of Israel in the midst of her*, she is both beautiful and majestic :
Hence

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Hence said to be *beautiful as Tirzah, comely as Jerusalem, and terrible as an army with banners,* Cant. vi. 4. It is not in the kingdom of Christ, as in the kingdoms of this world, where the Prince derives his might and splendour from his subjects. The Church derives all her strength and glory from her King.

(2.) Is Jesus Christ Lord in and over the Church? Then we may see the sin and danger of usurping any of the prerogatives which belong to him, by adding to, or taking from his institutions. How highly derogatory from his wisdom, honour and dignity would an earthly potentate consider it to be, if another was to add to his system of laws, or pretend to loose his subjects from their obligation to the laws of his empire? And if any of his own subjects should endeavour to do so, would it not be constructed treason? How offensive then must it be to the Lord Jesus, for worms of his footstool to impeach his wisdom and knowledge, either by setting aside any of his ordinances, or by adding the creatures of their own fancy thereunto.

(3.) Hence see with what care and diligence the Church and every particular member thereof, should, in their places and stations, strive together for the faith of the gospel. How earnestly should they contend for the truth *once delivered to the saints*? for the preservation of the purity of gospel-doctrine; with all the ordinances which our Lord Jesus hath appointed in the Church, respecting the worship, discipline and government thereof? These are the precious things of Zion, and worthy to be had in the highest esteem by all her children. It is the indispensable duty of all the professed subjects of Christ, and through grace it will be the real concern of his true friends and followers, carefully to observe these ordinances themselves, and endeavour to hand them
down

down in purity to the generations to come after them.

(4.) Hence see matter of reproof, and that not only to those who openly condemn the authority of Christ as Lord over the Church, which is the case with all the openly wicked and profane; but also to many, even of those who profess subjection to him, calling him *Lord, Lord*; while they content themselves with a *name to live*, not really yielding to the sceptre of his grace, and giving him the obedience of faith. Should it be asked who are these? We shall endeavour to answer, by asking you a few questions. And,

[1.] Are there any among you, come to the years of discretion, who are habitual neglecters of secret prayer? If there be any such among you, they are not the subjects of Christ in reality, whatever they may be by profession. All those who *are planted in the house of God by his grace*, they are a praying people: Hence the true Israel of God are designed *the generation of them that seek his face*, Psal. xxiv. 6. Prayer is, as it were, the breath of the new creature; and one of the good works, in a special manner, to which persons are created anew in Christ Jesus.

[2.] Are there any among you who have families, and do not call upon the name of God in and with them? If so, the Holy Ghost reckons them among the Heathen, though they bear the Christian name, Psal. ix. 17. "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God." When the Lord shall "pour his wrath upon the heathen that have not known him, and the kingdoms that have not called on his name," (Psal. lxxix. 6.); prayerless families will not escape, Jer. x. 25. It is true, there may be a form of godliness, where there is nothing of the power of it; but it is

as certain, that the power of godliness cannot be where there is not the form of it. The general neglect of family-worship, and particularly of offering up the morning-sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to God, that is become so very fashionable in our day, is a sad sign that the true subjects of Christ are but comparatively few in this generation.

[3.] Are there any of you, who, though you come to ordinances, sit as the people of God, and hear as his people, yet can, when you fall into the society of the profane, and are out from under the eye of fellow-professors, conform to the company, drink, swear, ridicule seriousness, and break your jests upon the word of God? If so, you are not the subjects of Christ, and he is not your Lord, but you are of your father the devil. Those who profess religion, and can mock at things sacred, or take pleasure in the company of those who do it, are among the very worst kind of Christ's enemies; as they act to his dishonour, and the scandal of religion, and that even under the mask of professed friendship to him.

[4.] Are there any of you who never spent a serious hour about the state and condition of your souls, but are living strangers to the duty of self-searching; and never knew what it was to be earnest with the Lord, to discover to you what condition you are really in, but are contentedly living in darkness as to that matter? If this is the case with any of you, it is a strong evidence that you are not yet among the true subjects of Zion's King and Lord. True believers have seen they were once dead, *dead in trespasses and sins*: And though they are not all in case to condescend upon the precise time and circumstances of the Lord's beginning to deal savingly with them; yet they have all got such a view of their state by nature, and been so convinced of their
perishing

perishing condition and utter inability to help themselves, as that they have seen they stood in absolute need of Christ as their Saviour from sin and wrath; and they have it for the earnest desire of their hearts, that they may be found in him, not having their own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is of the faith of Jesus Christ. They are frequently turning their eye inward; and being jealous of themselves, they are desirous that the Lord may search and try their hearts, and discover to them the true state of matters there; saying with the Psalmist, Psal. cxxxix. 23, 24. "Search me, O God, and know my heart: Try me, and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in thy way everlasting." In a word, are there any of you who are not regenerate and born again? If this is the case, (and there is reason to fear it is so with respect to many of you,) you are so far from being among the number of Christ's true subjects, that you are under the power and dominion of Satan, having your hearts full of enmity at Christ; for *the carnal mind is enmity against God, it is not subject to his law, neither indeed can be.* Except the Lord has circumcised your hearts; except ye be born again, you are not the real subjects of Christ; you can neither enjoy the privileges, nor perform the duties of his true subjects in the kingdom of grace, nor possess a seat in the kingdom of glory, John iii. 3.

2. A *second* use of this doctrine, may be in a word of trial and examination. Are you really among the true subjects of Christ or not? Let me ask you, What acquaintance have you got with him as your Lord and Redeemer? Without a saving interest in Christ, as your Redeemer from the curse of the broken law, and the guilt and power of sin, you can never submit to him in a kindly manner,

as

as your Lawgiver and King. Were you ever determined to say from the heart to a God in Christ, as we find the Church doing, Isa. xxvi. 13. "O Lord our God, other lords besides thee have had dominion over us; but by thee only, will we make mention of thy name." When a man is brought to submit to Christ as his Lord, he puts a bill of divorce into the hands of all his former lords and lovers.

How are you pleased with the laws of Christ, by which he rules his subjects? Do you esteem his commandments *concerning all things to be right*? And is it your desire to have your hearts and lives brought up to conformity to the law, and not to have the law brought down to your corrupt liking? If you are among Christ's true friends and faithful subjects, the more clearly you are brought to discern the holiness, spirituality and extent of his law, the more will you love it, and rejoice in it *after the inward man*, Rom. vii. 22.

What thoughts do you entertain concerning your Lord? What think ye of Christ? What think ye of his person? *Is he fairer in your esteem, than the children of men?* What think ye of his love, his righteousness, offices and fulness; in all these he is truly precious to them who believe.

Of what quality is your obedience to the royal law of Christ? Is it of an evangelical nature? Does it spring from faith in him, love to him, and a tender regard to his authority displayed therein? Is your obedience the free and hearty obedience of dear children, and not of a servile nature? Are you denied to your duties, done in obedience to the law, as being any part of your justifying righteousness before God? Not to enlarge here, if Christ is your Lord, you are really concerned to comply with

with his Father's commandment in the text, *Worship thou him*. You endeavour to make conscience of this duty, in secret, private, and in the assemblies of the saints. And you not only worship him in an external manner, but also in an internal; meditating, in a believing manner, upon his person, love, and his works of wonder done for your redemption and salvation; whereby he has made your hearts glad, and afforded you ground of *everlasting consolation and good hope through grace*.

3. *Thirdly*, We shall shut up this discourse with a few exhortations. And,

(1.) We exhort you who have been brought, by the power of grace, to take Christ for your Lord, "to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of your Lord." This is the Apostle's exhortation to all the subjects of Christ, 2 Pet. iii. 18. Grow in acquaintance with his person, his laws, and the gospel-manner of yielding obedience thereto. We exhort you to go forth to daily duty and difficulty, work and warfare, exercising a believing dependence upon your Lord; for all the strength and through-bearing that you need in his service. Lean not to your own understanding and strength, nor even to grace received: But *be strong only in the Lord, and in the power of his might*. Whatever trials you may be trysted with in the way of your duty to Christ as your Lord, weary not in well-doing, nor be offended in him; for *in due time ye shall reap, if ye faint not*. He whom you serve, is ever spiritually and graciously present with you, to strengthen and uphold you with the right hand of his righteousness; and furnish you with the suitable and seasonable supplies of his grace, which you need in his service: And when you have served your generation here, according to his will, he will graciously admit you to serve him in the high-

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er house; where you will be in case to comply with the duty enjoined in the text, in a manner exceedingly more perfect than you are now in case to do. There is a gracious connection between serving Christ now, and being with him where he is in due time. Hence he tells his disciples, John xii. 26. "If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: If any man serve me, him will my Father honour."

(2.) We exhort you who are strangers to Christ, and so in a state of rebellion against him, to consider the woful condition you are in. You are the servants of Satan, and his service is the worst of slavery; and dreadful is the wages they must all receive who finally persist in it, it is *death*, Rom. vi. 23. Eternal exclusion from the presence of God; and most grievous torments, both in soul and body, for ever. Though the service of Satan may seem pleasant to corrupt nature now, it will prove bitter in the latter end. Consider then, that Jesus Christ is your rightful Lord; he is your Lord-Creator, Preserver and Redeemer, and your Lord-Redeemer by office; able and ready to deliver you out of the hand of all your spiritual enemies, and to take you into his family and service, where true honour and liberty are only to be enjoyed. They are only *free*, whom the Son makes free; and these are free indeed. We then exhort all who have hitherto been serving diverse lusts and pleasures, under the conduct and direction of Satan, to change sides, cast off Satan's yoke; *break the league with hell, and the agreement with death*, by coming in under the banner of the Captain of salvation (their rightful LORD) which is a banner of love. Look to a God of infinite love and grace, that while he is continuing to set forth Jesus Christ in the gospel,

as an *ensign of the people*, Isa. xi. 10. he may be graciously pleased to accomplish the promise to each of you in particular; *in his name shall the Gentiles trust*. We exhort you who are young persons, to embrace our Lord Jesus by faith: It is good to be acquainted with Christ; and it is good in a special manner to be early acquainted with him. The time of youth is the most advantageous season for seeking the Lord. The cares of the world have not got so far in upon you of the young generation, as in the case of those of riper years; your affections are more tender; and the time of youth is the season wherein the holy Spirit most readily deals with persons to bring them over to Christ: And though a gracious God casts out none who come unto him, even at the eleventh hour, yet he is pleased to speak as if young persons were peculiarly welcome to him, Prov. viii. 17. "I love them that love me, and those that seek me early shall find me." Let not the trials which attend a religious life, deter you from putting your necks under the yoke of Christ; for his yoke is lined with love, and his work carries its reward in its bosom. For though the heart of the believer knoweth its own bitterness, yet strangers intermeddle not with his joy. Do not put off the duty of believing in Christ, trusting to long life; there are few who hear the gospel, but have a purpose of closing with Christ, some time or other, but they think the proper season is not yet; but it is dangerous trusting to to-morrow, seeing you *know not what a day may bring forth*. Who can assure the youngest of you, but that this night the Lord may require thy soul at thine hand? And then, as the tree falls, so it must for ever lie. In a word, we exhort young and old of you, who are yet estranged from Christ, to *acquaint yourselves with him now, and be at peace with*

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with God, through him; and thereby good shall come to your souls. Yea, nothing shall befall you in the present world, but what shall turn out for your real advantage in the issue; and no heart can conceive, nor tongue express, what you shall find laid up for you in the world to come.

S E R M O N XVII.

**Gentile Sinners coming into the CHURCH,
and presenting themselves a free-will
offering to the LORD upon the Gospel
Altar.**

PSAL. xlv. 12.

*And the Daughter of Tyre shall be there with a
Gift, even the Rich among the People shall in-
treat thy favour.*

IT is truly desirable to see many asking the way to Zion with their faces thitherward; and matter of gladness to those who are themselves engaged in the cause of Christ, to see others following their example; and to hear from the promise, that some shall be doing so, in all generations, as in the words now read. "The daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift, the rich among the people shall intreat thy favour." In the preceding verse, the Church was called to be faithful and diligent in the service of Christ her Lord; and in this verse, she is encouraged in that service, by being assured that many shall be brought to join
with

with her in the pleasant work of lifting up the burden of the Redeemer's praise. The words in general contain a promise and prediction of the calling of the Gentiles into the Church, to partake of the same privileges with the Jews; when the middle wall betwixt Jew and Gentile should be broken down, and the thick vail of ceremonies taken away, the substance being exhibited. The calling of the Gentiles was not to constitute a new or distinct Church, but they were to be grafted in among the Jews, and to enjoy the same privileges with them, for substance, and perform the same duties; things typical being laid aside. Hence in that promise, which we have of the inbringing of the Gentiles, Isa. liv. The Church is called to *enlarge the place of her tent, and to stretch forth the curtains of her habitation*, ver. 2. that there might be room for the Gentiles; and, ver. 3. it follows, *Thou shalt break forth on the right hand, and on the left: and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, &c.* The speaker here, and those to whom the speech is directed, are still the same as in the preceding, viz. JEHOVAH in the person of the Father, and the Church: And the words contain an intimation to the Church of God's gracious design of enlarging her, in New Testament days; by giving Christ "the Heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession." But more particularly,

1. We may observe the subject spoken of, namely, *the daughter of Tyre: The daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift, &c.* Tyre was a strong city, near the border of the inheritance of the tribe of Asher, Josh. xix. 29. Hiram, King of Tyre, was very friendly to David, and Solomon his son, as we see, 2 Sam. v. 11. and 1 Kings v. 1—. Though afterwards the Tyrians did not remember the brotherly

therly covenant, Amos i. 9. but joined in league with other nations against Israel, Psal. lxxxiii. 7, 8. By the daughter of Tyre, we are to understand the inhabitants of Tyre, as the inhabitants of Zion and Jerusalem are frequently designed the daughters of these places. And the people of Tyre are here put for the Gentile nations in general, who were to be gathered to Shiloh, a part being taken for the whole. So, we find the Prophets frequently speaking of the calling of the Gentiles in general, by mentioning one particular nation or people, Psal. lxviii. 31. and Isa. xix. 18. And, that the people of Tyre are not to be considered as the only persons intended in this prophecy, is evident from Psal. lxxxvii. 4. where they are spoken of, among other Gentile nations whom God promises to add to the Church in gospel-days: "I will make mention of Rahab, and Babylon, to them that know me; behold Philistia, and Tyre, with Ethiopia: This man was born there." Only the daughter of Tyre may be mentioned here, rather than the people of any other nation; as the Tyrians were the least likely to embrace the gospel, of any people whatever; for being very powerful, rich and opulent, they were minding nothing less than a taking up the cross to follow Christ.

2. We may observe what is affirmed concerning the daughter of Tyre, concerning poor sinners of the Gentiles; *They shall be there*, saith JEHOVAH; they shall come into the Church. They shall have the Saviour exhibited to them, and be determined by grace, to receive him in the arms of their faith and love; embrace him as their Lord-Redeemer, submit to his righteousness, and take on his yoke. We have a promise to the same purpose respecting the calling of the Gentiles, Isa. xxvii. 13. "And it shall come to pass in that day, (in the gospel-day)

" that

“ that the great trumpet shall be blown ; and they
 “ shall come which were ready to perish in the land
 “ of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt,
 “ and shall worship the LORD in the holy mount
 “ at Jerusalem.” The blowing of the gospel trumpet over the atoning sacrifice which Christ has offered to God, *for a sweet smelling savour*, is the great mean in the hand of the Spirit, for gathering perishing sinners unto the glorious Shiloh.

3. Observe how the daughter of Tyre is to be there ; how she shall come into the Church: She shall be there *with a gift* ; she shall not come empty-handed. The males of Israel were not to appear before the Lord empty, but to come into his courts bringing an offering with them. “ The daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift.” What that gift is which sinners present to the Lord, when they come to be planted in his house by his grace, we may enquire afterwards ; only we are sure it is principally to be understood of themselves. They give *their own selves unto the Lord* ; and until persons do so, no other gift they can offer can be acceptable to him.

4. We have an amplification of the promise, *even the rich among the people shall intreat thy favour.* By the *rich among the people*, we may either understand the Tyrians themselves, who were very rich, as you see, Isa. xxiii. 8: where Tyre is called *the crowning city*, her merchants are said to be *princes*, and her traffickers *the honourable of the earth*. And, saith the Prophet Zechariah, chap. ix. 3. They “ heaped up silver as the dust, “ and fine gold as the mire of the streets.”

Or the *rich among the people* may be taken largely, as pointing forth all the rich, mighty, and noble among the Gentiles, whom God has or will yet

yet bring into the Church; acquainting them savingly with Christ, and the way of salvation through him. Hence says he to the Church, Isa. lx. 3. "The Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." Though it is evident, both from Scripture and the effects of the gospel among its hearers, that electing love has pitched chiefly upon the poor; yet the mighty and noble are not all left under the ruins of the fall: And when it is said unto the Church, *the rich among the people shall intreat thy favour*, the meaning is, they shall reckon it their greatest honour and dignity to be admitted into the Church, and to be allowed to enjoy the same privileges with her. They shall say to the people of God, *We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you*. It is the favour and friendship of God, as manifested in Christ, that all true converts desire to enjoy; it is his favour they intreat; it is fellowship and communion with him, that their souls pant after: But as the enjoyment of it, is to be had in the way of coming into the fellowship and society of the Church, they are therefore said to intreat her favour. "Even the rich among the people shall intreat thy favour." This promise had its begun accomplishment very early after the gospel was sent to the Gentile world; for the Tyrians were among the first fruits of the Gentiles, which were presented to God upon the gospel altar; as you will see by comparing Mark vii. 24. with Acts xxi. 3, 4. But, as hath been already observed, this prediction and promise (for it partakes of the nature of both) is not to be considered as respecting any particular nation or people exclusively; but is to be viewed as respecting all the Gentiles in general, whom God, in the riches of his love and grace, hath foreordained to eternal life, and purposed

sed to bring to glory by Jesus Christ, as the *Captain of their salvation*.

5. and lastly, We may observe the security that we have for the accomplishment of the promise; God takes the work into his own hand: "The daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift;" persons of every station, and in every condition of life among the Gentiles, shall present themselves as free-will offerings to the Lord, *even the rich among the people shall intreat thy favour*. The rich among the people are ordinarily the most stubborn, proud and haughty of the people, and most apt to *trust in uncertain riches*; and so, of all people, the most unlikely to put their shoulder to the work of the Lord, or value the friendship of the Church: Yet even they shall present themselves as living sacrifices to God, and earnestly desire fellowship and communion with his despised Church and people. Divine faithfulness is engaged to bring them to do so, and Almighty power is able to give a being to the accomplishment of the promise. From the words thus explained, we observe the following doctrine:

Doct. *Such is the power of Divine grace accompanying the dispensation of the gospel, that it often prevails with the most obstinate sinners, cordially to make a gift of themselves, and their all, to the Lord; and to reckon it an eminent blessing and privilege, to enjoy the favour and fellowship of his people, in being admitted to partake of the same privileges with them, and perform the same duties.* "The daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift, even the rich among the people shall intreat thy favour."

The method in which, through Divine assistance, we shall endeavour to speak a little from this text and doctrine, is,

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I. To

I. To mention some things implied in the words.

II. Speak a little concerning the gift which persons present to the Lord in the day of their effectual calling.

III. Speak of their presenting that gift to the Lord.

IV. Illustrate the truth of the doctrine.

V. Apply.

We return then to the *first* thing proposed in the method, which was,

I. To mention some things implied in the words. And,

1. The words imply, that whatever be the outward lot and condition of a person or people, before the Lord is pleased to visit them with a dispensation of the gospel, their case is truly melancholy and affecting. *They are estranged from the life of God through the deceitfulness that is in sin.* The Apostle to the Ephesians, chap. ii. 11, 12. gives us a most affecting description of the condition they were in before their conversion, in common with all the rest of the Heathen world. "At that time (says he) ye were without Christ, being aliens from the common-wealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." The daughter of Tyre was rich, *she heaped up silver as the dust, and fine gold as the mire in the streets.* She was had in great estimation by other nations, much honoured and sought unto on account of her wealth: But she knew not God the chief good, nor the true substance which he causes them who love him to inherit. When it is said,

"the

“the daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift,” it supposes, that her then present state was a state of distance from God, and the ordinary means of gracious intercourse with him. She was in the family of Satan, disposing of herself and her services to him, as the god of this world, and so *fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind.*

2. That it is by the special providence of God, that persons or nations are brought into the fellowship of the gospel. It is the fruit of God’s eternal purpose and love-design toward them. *The daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift.* She *must* be there, for God will *bring* her there; he hath promised to do it, and his promise is an exact transcript of his purpose so to do. The gospel is not sent to any person or people, nor they brought to the enjoyment of it, by accident; but it is sent to them as the result of God’s eternal purpose, Eph. i. 4. And when persons are savingly drawn unto Christ by means of the gospel, it is the fruit of his everlasting love to them. Hence says he, Jer. xxxi. 3. “I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee.” In all the events which take place concerning the Church, whether prosperous or adverse, the Lord is performing the thing which he hath appointed for her from everlasting. And this is eminently the case in all his dispensations toward the genuine children of Zion.

3. That it is a very great privilege, to have a place in God’s house. Those who are within the Church, enjoy all the ordinary means of salvation, whereby God is pleased to communicate the blessings of redemption to his people. The Church is the *valley of vision*. The inhabitants of Zion have light in all their dwellings; whereas the rest of the world sit in darkness. And it is not only a great

great blessing to enjoy the means of grace, but it is really accounted to be so by all who are endowed with spiritual discerning. *The daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift, even the rich among the people shall intreat thy favour.* It is a lamentable truth indeed, that many who enjoy the external privileges of the Church, will, in the issue, be more miserable than those who never heard of Christ, and the way of salvation through him; but this is owing to their own unbelief and impenitency, which turns that into the *savour of death unto death*, which God designed to be the *savour of life unto life*. But whatever improvement men make of the gospel and the ordinances thereof, those who enjoy them in purity are exalted to heaven, compared with those who are either destitute of the gospel altogether; or those who are entertained one Sabbath after another, with something that partakes of little more of the gospel than the name.

4. The words imply, that though there are but few of the rich, the mighty and the noble, whom God is pleased to call by his grace, 1 Cor. i. 26. the greater part of his family consisting of the poor, or such as he hath been pleased to appoint to a mean and low condition in this world, James ii. 5.; yet there are, nevertheless, some who are rich in this world, whom God is pleased to make *rich in faith* also, and *heirs of the kingdom which he has purchased for them that love him.* *The daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift, even the rich among the people shall intreat thy favour.* The family of God shall be made up of all sorts of people, rich and poor, high and low; and the freedom, sovereignty and power of his grace, is richly manifested in the choice he hath been pleased to make, by calling so many of the poor *from the power of darkness into the kingdom of his dear Son*; while he passes by the
mighty

mighty and noble. He makes it undeniably evident, that he has not chosen men to eternal life, because he stood in need of them and their services: For had this been the case, the mighty and noble, the princes and potentates of the earth were the most likely to have been in case to do him service. And as free, rich and sovereign grace is displayed in bringing many of the poor into the household of God; so its power and efficacy is rendered most conspicuous in bringing some of the rich, mighty, and noble, into it also. That any of them are called, is a sufficient evidence, that it is not owing to any defect in the power of God, that his family is not made up of the princes and potentates of this world; but because it has not seemed good in his sight. For that power which can prevail with one of those, to intreat the favour of the Church, could as easily prevail with them all. It is equally easy with the arm of Omnipotence to bring the great as the small, to give him glory by believing in the name of his only begotten Son; for the heart of the prince, as well as of the peasant, is in his hand; and he can *turn it as the rivers of water, whithersoever he pleaseth*. But though this is really the case, yet had not God been pleased to call some of the mighty and noble, it might have proven a temptation to some, to think that their conversion could by no means be effected. But God, by calling some of them, has given sufficient evidence of his ability to have called the whole of them, had it so pleased him. So that the choice which he has made, is to be resolved solely into the good pleasure of his will, Luke x. 21. And indeed, the plan of our salvation, in all the parts of it, is drawn in such a manner, as to confound carnal wisdom, set grace upon the throne, and lay all creature-glory for ever in the dust.

Finally,

Finally, The words seem to imply, that the rich among the people are, of all, the most backward to embrace Christ, submit to his righteousness, and take on his yoke. *Even the rich among the people shall intreat thy favour.* And these, would he say, are most unlikely to do so. Hence our Lord saith to the disciples, Matth. xix. 23. " Verily I say unto you, a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven." The rich among the people are ready to trust to *uncertain riches*, 1 Tim. vi. 17. The riches, honours, and pleasures of this world, are sad enemies to the souls of men. Though the danger does not proceed from these things, in themselves considered, but from the corrupted and depraved heart of man. We find an ancient complaint exhibited against the nobles of Judah, that *they put not their necks to the work of the Lord*, Neh. iii. 5. Alas! It is matter of lamentation, that there are many who, as soon as the Lord is pleased to favour them with a prosperous gale, respecting the things of a present world; instead of their being the more humble and thankful on that account, as they certainly should, being the more indebted to the Divine goodness; they become high minded: And make such an improvement of God's kindness, in common providence, as would seem to intimate, that they think they have got possession of the good things of the present life, for no other purpose than to put them in a better capacity to carry on a warfare against heaven. Many instances of this kind, it were too easy to exhibit.

II. The *second* thing in the method was, to speak a little concerning the gift which persons present to the Lord, in the day of their effectual calling. *The daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift, &c.*

1. Then,

1. Then, men give themselves to the Lord, in the day of their regeneration, and effectual vocation. This is the principal gift, and that without which nothing which they can present to him can possibly be accepted. In the day of the sinner's conversion, a gracious God, Father, Son, and holy Spirit, gives himself to the man, as his God and portion; and the man is powerfully determined to give himself to the Lord, according to what you have, Hof. ii. 23. "I will say to them that were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God." And saith the Lord, by the Prophet Isaiah, chap. xlv. 5. "One shall say, I am the Lord's." The Macedonians gave their own selves to the Lord, 2 Cor. viii. 5. And the Apostle to the Romans saith, chap. xii. 1. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies (that is, their whole persons) a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Should it then be asked, What is it for persons to give themselves unto the Lord? We answer,

(1.) It is to give up the soul in all its powers and faculties to the Lord, to be employed in his service.

There is a devoting and giving up of the understanding, to search into the mysteries of godliness; to contemplate and meditate upon the three-one God, as made known to us in Christ Jesus, and upon the amazing discoveries which he has been pleased to make of himself to us in his word, and by his works; and particularly, in his word of promise, and in the work of redemption, *wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence*. There is much of practical godliness that consists in thinking and meditating much upon God, and his kindness

ness to us through Christ Jesus : Hence saith the Psalmist, Psal. xlviii. 9. " We have thought of thy loving-kindness, O God, in the midst of thy temple." It is one of the Scriptural designations given to the people of God, that they are those that *think upon his name*, Mal. iii, 16. " A book of remembrance was written before him, for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name."

There is a giving up of the will unto the Lord in the day of the sinner's conversion. Though the man was formerly self-willed, obstinate and rebellious ; yet in the day of the Mediator's power, he is brought, as it were, to sink his will in the Divine will and pleasure, and cordially to submit to God's will both of precept and providence : He is no longer disposed to consult with flesh and blood in the matters of God, but upon attaining the knowledge of his will, is ready, through grace, to comply with it ; though his doing so may be attended with ever so much difficulty and danger. Though flesh and blood would willingly avoid the cross, he is nevertheless disposed to adopt the language of the great Head, in another case, Matth. xxvi. 38. " Not as I will, but as thou wilt ; Father glorify thy name." This was the case we see with the Apostle Paul, when once it pleased God to *reveal his Son in him* ; then he cries out, Acts ix. 6. *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do ?*

Further, There is a withdrawing of the affections of the soul, such as, love, desire, joy, delight, &c. from the vain objects upon which they are naturally set ; and a setting them upon God in Christ the chief Good, and those things that are of a divine and heavenly nature, as the only objects worthy of them. The Apostle exhorts the Colossians to give evidence of their being risen with Christ, to new-

ness

ness of life, by setting their affections upon heavenly objects: Hence says he, Coloss. iii. 1, 2. "If ye
 "be risen with Christ, seek those things which are
 "above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of
 "God. Set your affections on things above, and
 "not on things on the earth." The man being
 brought to see God as a God of love and peace to
 him in Christ, is thereby sweetly constrained to love
 him, 1 John iv. 19. "We love him, because he
 "first loved us." And having tasted that God is
 good, the desires of the soul go out towards him,
 in earnest longings after intercourse and fellowship
 with him: Hence saith the Prophet in name of the
 Church, Isa. xxvi. 9. "With my soul have I de-
 "sired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit with-
 "in me, will I seek thee early." There is a de-
 voting of the memory to the Lord, that it may be,
 as it were, a store-house and repository of divine
 and heavenly things, viz. of the precious truths of
 God, and the soul-strengthening and heart-comfort-
 ing experiences of his goodness, according to that
 of the Spouse, Cant. viii. 13. "The mandrakes
 "give a smell, and at our gates are all manner of
 "pleasant fruits, new and old, which I have laid
 "up for thee, O my Beloved." In one word here,
 there is a giving up, or a subjecting of the consci-
 ence to the Lord Jesus, with a purpose never to
 acknowledge any other as lord of it but himself; he
 being the glorious Object to whom alone the con-
 science is subject, and to whom an unlimited pro-
 mise of obedience is due. The man being redeem-
 ed with a price, and a price so very valuable as
 that of the *precious blood of the Son of God*; he re-
 solves henceforth not to be a servant to men in any
 thing inconsistent with that dutiful subjection which
 he owes to Christ, and that glorious liberty where-
 with he hath made his people free.

(2.) As persons present their souls a living sacrifice unto the Lord in the day of their conversion, so they likewise give up their bodies to be employed in his service, "they yield their members as instruments of righteousness unto holiness," Rom. vi. 18. While a man continues in a state of irregnacy, he is employing his members as "instruments of unrighteousness to sin," as the Apostle shews at great length, Rom. viii. 10,—19. But in the day of conversion, they are all presented to the Lord to be employed in his service. The eye to behold his works, and look into his word, so as to affect the heart; so that the man's *sight and eyes are turned away from beholding vanity*. The ear is devoted to the Lord, to hear and listen to his voice; the hand to work, with an eye to his glory; the feet to run his errands; and the tongue, the human glory, to speak to and for God, and confess him, and the truth as it is in Jesus, before the world. Thus the man gives himself to the Lord to be his wholly, and for ever, without any reservation or intention to use any unlawful methods to avoid the cross, when he meets with it in the way of his duty; being heartily resolved to *follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth*.

(3.) and *lastly*, All that the man is, and hath, is contained in this gift. When persons really give themselves to the Lord, then they can keep back nothing that they have from him; if he be pleased to call for it at their hand. If they have children, they fail not to bring them to the Lord, by the prayer of faith, and devote them to his service; like those parents, who, it should seem, had been favoured with saving acquaintance with Christ themselves, they brought their children to him also, Mark x. 13. "They brought young children to him, that he should touch them;" or, as another

Evangelist

Evangelist hath it, "That he should lay his hands
"on them, and pray." Little children, or *sucklings*,
as the word signifies, are capable of receiving ble-
ssings from Christ; and the greatest kindness that
parents can shew unto them, is to bring them to
him, in the arms of faith, and plead for his blessing
upon them. When a man is once brought to Christ
himself, it is his earnest desire to have all his friends
and relations acquainted with him also; as we see
in the case of Andrew, with Simon Peter his bro-
ther, John i. 40, 41. If he has servants, it is his
heart's desire and prayer to God for them, that they
may be determined by grace to give themselves to
the Lord; that they, being set free from the fla-
very of sin and Satan, and made the servants of
God, *may have their fruit unto holiness, and the
end everlasting life.* When persons are really de-
termined to give themselves to the Lord, they re-
joice to see others disposing of themselves in the
same laudable manner; and however few should
be concerned to do it, yet their purpose and resolu-
tion is the same with that of Joshua, Josh. xxiv.
15. "As for me and my house, we will serve the
"Lord." Whatever power and influence they
have in the world, they are disposed to use it for
God, according to the places and stations to which
he has assigned them. They are concerned to ho-
nour the Lord with their substance, and bring their
silver and gold with them unto the name of the Lord,
Is. lx. 9. When we consult the Acts of the Apo-
stles, we find, that the primitive Christians were
very cheerful this way. And indeed, whatever
men may profess, if they have this world's good,
and either with-hold, or give with a grudge, that
which is needful for the support of a faithful go-
spel-ministry; or when they see their brother in
want, can shut up their bowels of compassion from
him,

him; they want one special mark and evidence of these who have given themselves to the Lord, and of those in whom the love of God really dwells. So much for a brief account of the gift which men present to the Lord, in the day wherein he makes himself known to them in a saving manner; and determines them to receive him, as offered to them in the gospel. Without proceeding further on the doctrinal part at this time, we shall conclude with a few inferences from what has been said. And,

[1.] Hence see, that man is not now where he should be; he is not in the condition into which God put him, when he dropped from his creating hand. God set man at first in the light of his countenance, where he enjoyed fellowship and communion with himself, the chief Good; and was in case to perform the duties enjoined him, and to account the services of his glorious Creator true liberty. But man is now in a very different condition; he has gone off from God; *his gold is become dim, and his most fine gold is changed.* Every man, in his natural state, is far from God; *his iniquity has separated between him and his God*; he is wandering upon the mountains of vanity; he may be found almost any where, but where he should be; he is serving strange lords, and divers lusts and pleasures. The Apostle declares this to be the case of all by nature, both Jews and Gentiles, before Divine power reach their hearts, Eph. ii. 2. They are walking “according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the hearts of the children of disobedience:” They are wearying themselves with very vanity; “spending money for that which is not bread, and labour for that which satisfieth not:” They are doing nothing, in God’s account, but those things of which they must one day be ashamed;

shamed; either in the way of having their faces filled with holy shame and blushing, being brought to a penitential grief and sorrow on account of their sin, or in the way of being covered with perpetual shame and confusion of face.

[2.] Hence see, that it is a high and distinguishing privilege to be within the Church, and to dwell in the courts of the Lord. Admission into the Church is here premised to the Gentiles, as a very high and honourable privilege. "The daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift; even the rich among the people shall entreat thy favour." We see how highly David prized this privilege, Psal. xxvii.

4. "One thing have I desired of the Lord (says he), that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life; to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his temple." Let others make riches, honours, and the other pleasures of sense, or all of them together, their one thing; as if he had said, As for me, my choice is made. It is a very great mercy to be of the household of God, even in respect of external privilege; for they who are so, are *not far from the kingdom of heaven*. But inexpressibly great is the blessedness of those who are planted in the house of God by his grace, for they shall be made pillars in the temple above in due time, *where they shall go no more out*; for to those to whom God gives grace, to them he will give glory also, Psal. lxxxiv. 11.

[3.] We may hence see noble ground of encouragement, for poor sinners to look again towards God's holy temple. Though they are neither able nor willing of themselves, to throw off Satan's yoke, break their league with hell, and their agreement with death, and so to present themselves living sacrifices to God; yet there is grace in the promise to

to make them both able and willing to do so. *The daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift; even the rich among the people shall intreat thy favour.* Poor sinners of the Gentiles shall be there with a gift. God will draw them powerfully, and then they shall flow together speedily to the goodness of the Lord. Grace is most richly displayed, not only in providing the sovereign remedy for diseased souls, but also in bringing sinners forward to take the benefit of it by faith, Isa. xlix. 22. "Thus saith the Lord God, I will lift up my hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people; and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders."

[4.] We may see from what has been said, where in the nature and substance of the duty of covenanting consists; and that whether it be performed by individual persons, or in a public and social manner. The very essence of this duty lies in a person, or persons, their taking hold of God as their God in Christ, with the hand of faith; as he makes over himself to them in the Covenant of Grace and promise, as their God: And thus giving up themselves to the Lord Jesus, under the influence of his Spirit, to be saved by him, and to serve him in an evangelical and spiritual manner; resolving through grace to cleave to him with purpose of heart, in the steadfast avowal of all his truths, ordinances, and institutions, and in the way of bearing testimony in their places and stations, against every contrary evil. Now, all this is most evidently contained in our text, besides many others which might be selected to the same purpose. *The daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift; even the rich among the people shall intreat thy favour.* It is not easy to conceive why the more serious among the different denominations of Christians, in Britain and in Ireland,

land, should be so much averse to the duty of public covenanting; and so backward to admit of the binding obligations of our Covenants, National and Solemn League, upon posterity. We apprehend, that one special reason of their being so, must certainly be an unaccountable inattention to their own exercise, when the Lord made himself first savingly known to their souls; for though we do not say, that any particular mode of covenanting is absolutely necessary, in the case of a person's really closing with Christ; yet we make no doubt to affirm, that there is no person who has arrived at the years of discretion, before being brought into a gracious state, but has been brought, in the Lord's dealing savingly with his soul, heartily to embrace the three-one God in Christ, as his God and portion; take hold of the Covenant of Grace and Promise, as his charter to eternal life; give himself to the Lord, to be for him, and not for another, resolving to follow him through good and bad report; purposing at the same time, to serve him, not in the *oldness of the letter*, but in the *newness of the Spirit*: Which he cannot do but in the way of his endeavouring to cleave to all the truths, ordinances, and institutions of the Lord Jesus, so far as he really attains to the knowledge of them; and in the way of testifying in his place and station against whatever is contrary thereto. And if the children of God are really brought personally to such exercise, when led out to close and particular dealing with God, about the state and condition of their souls, at first conversion; why should they be backward to make it appear that they have done so, by a public and open avouching of the Lord to be their God; and by avowing their purpose and resolution, through grace, to abide by him, whatever course others should chuse to take? especially considering that their doing

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ing so tends to the glory of God, the establishment of their own souls, the comfort and encouragement of fellow Christians; and the conviction of those who are at ease in Zion, when she is in trouble.

Finally, We may see the great need that gospel-hearers have, in their attending upon the means of grace, to look up to the glorious Author of the gospel; that he may, by the power of his Spirit and grace, make it effectual for their conversion, edification and comfort. The purest means, and the most accomplished instruments, cannot bring persons to give themselves to the Lord. No, this is work for him only, whose *right hand doth ever valiantly*. Though we had a Paul to plant, and an Apollos to water, there could be no increase but from the Lord. He alone can bring poor sinners to devote themselves to himself and service. All true-belivers, as *Isaac was*, are *children of the promise*; it is by the grace of the promise, that they are begotten, nourished up, and stablished, strengthened, settled, and made to abound in the faith with thanksgiving. In one word, let such as have given themselves to the Lord, be exhorted to look to him, that he may *keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of their hearts, and stablish them with him*. And let such of you as are yet Satan's bond-men, be exhorted to listen to the sound of the Jubilee trumpet; and to forsake the land of your captivity, and return to the Lord in the faith of his mercy; *and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon*. May it please the Lord, graciously to accomplish his promise to every one of you, Zech. xiii. 9. *I will say it is my people; and they shall say, the Lord is my God*. And to his name be praise.

S E R M O N XVIII.

PSAL. xlv. 12.

*The Daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift,
even the rich among the people shall intreat thy
favour.*

[The second Sermon on the Text.]

HAVING formerly spoken a little from these words. After offering some explanation and division of them, we observed the following doctrine from them, viz.

That such is the power of Divine grace accompanying the dispensation of the gospel, that it often prevails with the most obstinate sinners, cordially to make a gift of themselves and their all to the Lord; and to reckon it an eminent blessing and privilege, to enjoy the favour and fellowship of his people, in being admitted to partake of the same privileges with them, and perform the same duties. The method proposed, was, under Divine assistance,

I. To mention some things implied in the words of the text.

II. To discourse a little concerning the gift which persons present to the Lord, in the day of their effectual calling.

III. Speak of persons, their presenting that gift unto the Lord.

IV. Illustrate the truth of the doctrine. And,

V. Apply.

Having spoke to the first two of these heads formerly, we now proceed to the *third*, which was,

III. To speak of persons, their presenting their

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gift to the Lord, in the day of their effectual calling. And after putting you in mind, that the gift which they offer is chiefly to be understood of themselves; we may, in speaking to this head,

First, Mention some things imported in a person or people, their giving themselves to the Lord.

Secondly, Enquire for what ends and purposes persons give themselves to the Lord in the day of their effectual calling.

First, It was proposed to mention some things imported in a person or people, their giving themselves to the Lord. And,

1. This exercise of a person or people, their giving themselves to the Lord, imports their discerning, and taking up the ground and warrant that they have to do so, and that is, the Lord's giving and making over himself to them in the word of grace and promise, as their God in Christ. The revelation which God hath made of himself to sinners in the gospel, as in Christ, *reconciling the world to himself, and not imputing their trespasses unto them*, 2 Cor. v. 19. is the very ground and foundation upon which the faith of persons proceeds in their giving themselves to him. It is God's saying to a person or people, *Ye are my people*, which brings that person or people to say to him, *Thou art my God*, Hos. ii. 23. If God did not first give himself to a person or people, as their God in Christ, they would never consent to be his. Hence saith the spouse, Cant. ii. 16. "My Beloved is mine, and I am his." As if she had said, My beloved hath made himself mine, by a gracious gift of himself to me; and he hath also brought me, by the power of his grace, in a believing manner, to consent to be his.

2. A person or people, their giving themselves to the Lord, imports an humble and hearty acknowledgment,

knowledge, that they have formerly been under the power and dominion of other lords and lovers, Isa. xxvi. 13. All men are by nature subject to Satan as their head; they have joined themselves to him, as our Lord Jesus declares in his parable concerning the prodigal, Luke xv. 15, 16. And thus persons are brought to see and confess, with holy shame and blushing, in the day wherein they are admitted to behold God as pacified toward them in Christ, notwithstanding all that they have done to provoke him to anger, and to bring wrath to the uttermost upon their own souls.

3. A person or people, their giving themselves to the Lord, imports a real persuasion of his having an undoubted right to them, and their services; a persuasion that he is their rightful Lord and Master: And that, not only as he is their Lord-Creator and Preserver, but especially, as he is their Lord-Redeemer. Their giving themselves to him, supposes that they are now brought really to see that the other lords and lovers, who formerly had the dominion over them, were but usurpers, and had no claim to their services, love and affection.

4. This exercise has in it the person's withdrawing his allegiance from his former lords and lovers; his revoking and calling back the gift which he had made of himself, and his service to Satan, the god of this world. In the day wherein the sinner is determined to give himself to the Lord, the saying is accomplished in his case, which we have, Hos. xiv. 8. "Ephraim shall say, What have I any more to do with idols?" and what the Church saith, Isa. xxvi. 13. is the genuine language of the heart of every true convert, when giving himself to the Lord: "O Lord our God, other lords besides thee have had dominion over us:

" But

"But by thee only will we make mention of thy name."

5. A person or people, their giving themselves to the Lord, imports a cordial embracing and receiving a God in Christ, as their God and portion: Their taking the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, as their God and Father, according to his promise, Jer. iii. 19. "Thou shalt call me, My Father, and shalt not turn away from me." Their taking Christ as all, and in all, in the matter of their salvation, as made of God to them, *wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption*, 1 Cor. i. 30. And their taking the Holy Spirit of promise to be their Sanctifier, Comforter and Guide to the land of uprightness.

Finally, This exercise imports in it an unshaken purpose and resolution, through grace, to keep by the Lord, and cleave to him for better and worse. "To follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth," whatever their so doing may cost them; and whatever temptations they may meet with, to take offence at him, his truths, cause and interest in the world, either from its frowns or flatteries, or from the apostacy of fellow-professors. They are resolved, in all such cases, through grace, to say with the disciples, when their Lord asked them in a day of great backsliding, "Will ye also go away?" John vi. 67. "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

Secondly, It was proposed on this head, to enquire for what ends and purposes, persons give themselves to the Lord in the day of their effectual calling. And,

1. Sinners give themselves to the Lord in the day of their effectual calling, (their hearts being touched by grace) in compliance with the end and design

design of the glorious gospel, which is to bring sinners that are ready to perish in the far country of a natural state, home to God, as their God and Father in Christ. They are called and invited to return, and encouraged to do so, by ample promises of a kind and hearty reception; and in the day of conversion, they are determined to comply with the call. Then the Lord speaks powerfully to their hearts, saying, "Ye are my people," and upon his say of grace, they are in case to say, each for himself in particular, "Thou art my God." They are made willing to give themselves to him in the day of his power, when he makes bare his holy Arm.

2. They give themselves to the Lord, with an eye to their own safety. "The sinner, whose heart is touched, is aware of the dangerous condition wherein he is," before he gives himself to the Lord, in a way of believing: "He is convinced that he is condemned already; and that the wrath of God abideth on him: He sees the avenger of blood pursuing him, and ready every moment to seize him;" and therefore he gives himself to the Lord, that with him he may be in safeguard. The Lord Jesus calls sinners to look to him and be saved, Isa. xlv. 22. And he determines them to say with the heart, "Assur shall not save us; we will not ride upon horses: Neither will we say any more to the work of our hands, 'Ye are our gods; for in thee the fatherless findeth mercy.'"

3. They give themselves to the Lord, that they may be henceforth employed in his service, saying with the Apostle Paul, Acts ix. 6. "Lord what wilt thou have me to do?" And with the Psalmist, Psal. cxvi. 16. "O Lord, truly I am thy servant, and the son of thine hand-maid: Thou
"hast

"*hast loosed my bonds.*" When persons are determined to give themselves to the Lord, being delivered from the law as a Covenant of Works, the guilt and power of sin, and the dominion of Satan; then they are cheerfully disposed to *serve God without fear*, (without a slavish and servile fear) *in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of their life.* And the more of their time that they have lost in the service of sin and Satan, before they were determined to give themselves to the Lord, the more are they concerned to have it redeemed by a diligent improvement of the remainder of it, being convinced that "the time past of their life, may suffice them to have wrought the will of the flesh."

4. They give themselves to the Lord, to be led and guided through an insnaring world, by the good skill of his hand, "that he may lead them out by the right way, and bring them to a city of habitation," Psal. cvii. 7.; being persuaded that they have too long leaned to their own understanding already, and so wearied themselves in the greatness of their way; they are now disposed to give up themselves to his conduct and management, whom God hath given to be "a Leader and Commander to the people," Isa. lv. 4.; and "who leads Joseph like a flock," Psal. lxxx. 1. The man now hears the Lord saying unto him, "I will bring the blind by a way that they know not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known; I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them," Isa. xlii. 16. And upon such a gracious declaration as this, the soul says, Lord be a Leader unto me; for "good and upright is the Lord; therefore will he teach

"sinners
thousand of them were added to the Church"

“sinners in the way : Thy spirit is good, lead me
“to the land of uprightness.”

5. And to add no more on this head, they give
themselves to him, “that he may keep them by
“his almighty power, through faith unto salvation,”

1 Pet. i. 5. They deposite their whole man into
his hand, in the faith of his making a good account
of it, in the day of the Lord Jesus : Hence saith
the great Apostle of the Gentiles, 2 Tim. i. 12.

“I know whom I have believed, and I am per-
“suaded, that he is able to keep that which I have
“committed to him against that day.” The A-

pistle does not say what that was which he had
committed to the Divine custody ; but no doubt it
was his best, the precious soul. And, says he,

“I am persuaded, that he is both able and wil-
“ling to keep it against the day of Jesus Christ ;”

for we are not to consider him here as speaking of
the Divine power absolutely, in respect of which
God is able to do many things which he never will
do ; but of the ordinate power of God, which is
ever accompanied with his will.

IV. The *fourth* head in the method, was to il-
lustrate the truth of the doctrine, or shew, that
such is the power of Divine grace, accompanying
the dispensation of the gospel, that it often prevails
with the most obstinate sinners, cordially to make a
gift of themselves, and their all to the Lord ; and
to esteem it an eminent blessing and privilege to
enjoy the favour and fellowship of his people, in
being admitted to enjoy the same privileges with
them, and perform the same duties. And this
truth will appear when it is considered,

1. That though there were none who set them-
selves in greater opposition to the Lord Jesus, and
the grace of God manifested in him, than the Jews,
yet three thousand of them were added to the
Church

Church in one day, as you may see Acts ii. 37,—42. Many of them, it is probable, had heard our Lord himself, proclaiming the glad tidings of salvation; and there is little reason to doubt but divers of them saw some of the miracles which he wrought for the confirmation of the truth of his mission and doctrine, and nevertheless continued for a while obstinately to resist the means of conviction, carp and quarrel at the spiritual and searching nature of the doctrine of Christ, and prosecute him to the death, embruing their hands in his guiltless blood, with unrelenting rage and fury. Yet when the time of love was fully come, the power of Divine grace reached their hearts, rooted up their prejudices at Christ, and the gospel of his grace, brought down the strong holds of their original sin and corruption, cast down their towering imaginations, their corrupt reasonings, with all the high things which exalted themselves against the knowledge of God; and brought every thought into captivity to the obedience of that same Jesus whom they had but lately crucified and slain, under the odious character of an impostor and a deceiver of the people. And yet so richly was the power of Divine grace displayed in and towards them, that they were disposed cheerfully to *give themselves to the Lord*, and to esteem the favour and fellowship of his disciples and followers, an eminent privilege and blessing.

2. This truth will appear, when we consider the success which the gospel has already had among the Gentile nations. When the gospel was sent among them at the first, they were covered with darkness, filled with superstition, bewitched with idolatry, and fraught with prejudices against the gospel, which they deemed to be foolishness; while Satan was, at the same time, using every effort to have his throne more and more established in the

Gentile

Gentile world, and the first preachers of the gospel laboured under every outward disadvantage; yet so mightily did the word of the Lord prevail, being accompanied with the power and energy of the Spirit, that multitudes have been "turned from idols, to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, even Jesus, who saveth us from the wrath to come," 1 Thess. i. 10. Many of the Gentiles have already come to the light of our glorious IMMANUEL, and "Kings to the brightness of his rising," Isa. lx. 3. And the rich among the people have intreated his favour. And we have ample reason yet to expect a more eminent accomplishment of the promise in the text; for it is written concerning the blessed Shiloh, Isa. lii. 19. "That he shall sprinkle many nations; that kings shall shut their mouths at him: for that which had not been told them, shall they see; and that which they had not heard, shall they consider." Many particular instances might be condescended upon, for the illustration of the truth of the doctrine, such as the Apostle Paul; the jailor, of whom we read in the 16th of the Acts; Mary Magdalene, &c. But on these we shall not insist, but go on to make some improvement of the subject, which was the last thing proposed in the method. And having already improved it a little, in an use of information: We may improve it, *Secondly*, in a word for trial and examination. Persons do well to try where they are, and that both as to their state and exercise. This is a duty which is never unseasonable. Have you then really given yourselves unto the Lord? or are you yet *aliens to the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise?* For your help in this important enquiry, we shall only lay before you the few following things. And,

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(1.) If

(1.) If you have really given yourselves to the Lord, whether you were led out to this exercise in an explicit, exprefs, and verbal manner, or in a manner more implicit, by your only giving the consent of the heart to be for the Lord, and not for another: I say, in which ever of these ways you have been determined to give yourselves to the Lord, if you have really done it, "you have
 " accepted of God in Christ for himself, and that
 " without making any conditions about peace and
 " prosperity, and freedom from trouble in this
 " world;" but you gave yourself to him without any reserve, leaving it solely with the Lord to chuse out your lot for you in the present world, according to the good pleasure of his will; purposing, that, through his grace, you should never be offended in him, whatever you should be called to do or suffer for his sake: You have made no reservation or condition with God, against reproach, imprisonment, banishment, poverty, losses, troubles, and distresses in the present world. For though the Lord does not see meet to tryt every one of his people with all these trials, yet none of them can promise themselves a total exemption from any, or even all of them; and every true Christian supposes the worst, and is a martyr in resolution.

(2.) If you have really given yourselves to the Lord, it was with much affection you did so: We read of the kindness of youth, and the love of espousals, Jer. ii. 2. If you have given yourselves to the Lord, it was in a marriage-covenant. You have taken him for your husband, and presented yourselves as chaste virgins unto Christ, and there is nothing more eminent in the marriage-covenant than love and affection. Those who have never experienced any thing of true marriage affection towards God in Christ, for himself, have reason to

suspect

suspect that they have never given themselves to him. And if, on the other hand, the main current of your desire, love and affection, goes out toward him, and the believing remembrance of his name, it is an infallible mark and evidence that he is yours, and that ye are his; for where a man's heart is, there his treasure is to be found also.

(3.) If you have given yourselves to the Lord, you cannot fail to admire his love and condescension to you, in his giving himself to you, in the word of grace and promise, and determining you to give yourselves to him. In these things God has richly manifested his condescension to you, and it is wondrous in your eyes. "Condescension" is endearing and satisfying: We find it so even among men. If a man who is great in the world, doth but condescend to respect and be familiar with them that are poor, that are beggars, it is looked upon as a very great matter, and doth wonderfully engage such persons to them who thus condescend. But let that distance be what it will, that is between the highest king and the meanest beggar, they are men still: And, upon some accounts, the meanest may be the better. But there is an infinite distance between God and men; between the *high and the lofty One, the God of glory, the Possessor of heaven and earth*, and poor sinful dust and ashes, that he should take them into covenant with him;" taking himself engaged to be their God, and allowing, enabling, and determining them to give themselves to him, to be his people, are acts of condescension, quite above what either men or angels could ever have thought of.

(4.) If you have given yourselves to the Lord, you will be frequently recognizing that deed; yea,
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it will be habitually in your minds, and often upon the imagination of the thoughts of your hearts. This we find was the case with the Psalmist David, Psal. xxx. 14. "I said thou art my God." Psal. cxix. 57. "I have said that I will keep thy precepts." And again, saith he, Psal. cxl. 6. "I have said unto the Lord thou art my God." And as you will frequently be recognizing the deed of gift which you have made of yourselves to the Lord, your aim and study in doing so, will be, that God may be honoured; the impressions of your having given yourselves to him, revived; his rivals set aside; yourselves excited and stirred up to more liveliness in every duty; and that your faith, love, joy, and every other grace of the Spirit, may be yet more strengthened and confirmed: And we may add further here, that as you will be often calling to mind that you have given yourselves to the Lord, you will likewise have some experience of being led out, at some times, to the exercise of devoting yourselves anew to him. Indeed, every time that the believer is brought under the influences of the Spirit, to the renewed actings of faith on a God in Christ, he, on the matter, renews all his former obligations, to be for him; for, in every act of faith which the believer is enabled to put forth, he is therein giving himself to the Lord anew, as if he had never done so before.

(5.) If you have given yourselves to the Lord, you have a high esteem and valuation of himself, and of every thing that stands connected with him. You prize his word in all the parts of it, more than all the riches of a present world. You delight in his ordinances, because they are the galleries where he walks, and the places where his honour dwells. You love his people, and prize their

friendship

friendship and fellowship as very special privileges, even though their condition, in this present world may be but mean and low. It is with them you expect to take up your eternal lodging, and you delight in their company and converse by the way. You are moreover, tender in your walk and conversation, and on your guard against every thing that might prove offensive to Jew or Gentile, or the Church of God; lest you should either grieve the godly, or cast a stumbling block before the wicked. But, in a word, not to insist here, if you have given yourselves to the Lord, you are disposed to make conscience of honouring him with your substance; you do not rob him, in tithes, and offerings, whether for the outward support of the gospel, or the relief of the poor. Persons contributing cheerfully for these purposes, according as the Lord is pleased to prosper them, is evidently included in the gift mentioned in the text, as we shewed you before. There are many who can make very free with their substance at balls, penny-weddings, promiscuous dancings, and other seminaries of lewdness, who would reckon as much given to a religious use, for a series of years, as they can spend upon one of these occasions, an irreparable loss: But you have not so learned Christ. If you have really given yourselves unto him, you know, that whatever you have you have it from him, and that it is to him you are accountable for the use and improvement you make of it. And therefore, you endeavour so to use his goodness, even in common providence, as that you may be in case to give in your account with joy, and not with grief and heaviness, as many, alas! will be found to do, to whom the Lord has given great abundance of the good things of the present life, because they have spent it upon their lusts. We

shall only add here, that those who have given themselves to the Lord, they do not, when suitably exercised, merely reckon it their duty to contribute for the purposes above mentioned, as circumstances require, but they esteem it a real privilege that they have occasion to do it.

Secondly, We may, from this subject, infer matter of consolation to all who have been determined to give themselves to the Lord.

They are in a safe and happy condition; they have made the Most High their habitation; and therefore no real evil can befall them, neither any plague come near their dwelling. They are safe from the curse of the broken law; safe from the tyranny of Satan, and can never be brought back again into their former state of slavery and bondage to him; he no longer rules in their hearts; his power and dominion in and over them is broken, and "the God of peace will bruise him under their feet shortly," Rom. xvi. 20. They are set free from the reigning power of sin; so that however much it may rage in them, and however far it may at times prevail against them, it has nevertheless received a deadly wound in their souls by pardoning and regenerating grace, and that wound can never be healed. They are set in safety from the sting of death, and the power of the grave. The wormwood and the gall is taken out of all the troubles and calamities they can possibly be trusted with, in the present world; nay, they must profit by all the trials that can befall them in their way to their Father's house, Rom. viii. 28. "We know that all things work together for good, to them that love God; to them that are called according to his purpose." And, saith the Psalmist, "All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth, unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies."

"testimonies," Psal. xxv. 10. In a word, it is unspeakable matter and ground of comfort, to all whom the Lord hath determined to give themselves to him, that he will neither turn away from them, to do them good, nor yet suffer them to depart from him, Jer. xxxii. 40. but that he will most assuredly keep them, by his *almighty power, through faith unto salvation*. So that every one of them may say in the language of faith, what the Apostle did, 2 Tim. iv. 18. *The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom.*

The last use we shall make of this doctrine may be in a word of exhortation, *first*, To those who have been determined to give themselves to the Lord: And, *secondly*, To such as are yet practically saying, *Our lips are our own, and who is Lord over us?*

As for you then who have been determined, by grace, to give yourselves to the Lord;

1. We exhort you to bless the great and glorious name of the Lord your God, that he hath been graciously pleased so to shine into your hearts, as to give you the saving knowledge of himself, and bowed your obstinate and rebellious wills unto a cordial yielding of yourselves unto the Lord, and so hath caused you *to enter into his sanctuary which he hath sanctified for ever*. He has given you spiritual prudence to foresee the evil, and to hide yourselves, while many, no worse than you once were, are left to wallow in the mire and puddle of sin, serving divers lusts and pleasures, and so are still exposed to the storm and tempest of the Divine displeasure.

2. We exhort you to be ever mindful whose you are, and to whom you have devoted yourselves and your services. Remember that you are not
your

your own, but that you are the Lord's. Believers are a ransomed company, being redeemed from their *vain conversation*, not with corruptible things, such as silver and gold are, but with the precious blood of God's dear Son. And of these things they should frequently put their own souls in remembrance, both for their comfort and their caution. This we find the Psalmist did. Hence, says he, Psal. xxxi. 14. "O Lord, I said thou art my God." The Lord had brought him to say so, and we find him putting his own soul in mind of it, Psal. xvi. 2. "O my soul, thou hast said unto the Lord, "thou art my God." As if he had said, "O my soul, keep it ever on record, that a gracious God hath been pleased to bring thee all the length to lay claim to him by faith as thy God, and the lot of thine inheritance." We also find the Apostle Paul comforting himself, amidst all the afflictions that he endured for Christ's sake and the gospel's, by calling to mind, that he had been determined, in a day of power, to commit the keeping of his soul unto the Lord: Hence, says he, 2 Tim. i. 12. "I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."

3. Be exhorted, when Satan, the world, and the remaining corruptions of your own hearts, would seek to entice and draw you aside from the service of God; I say, be exhorted to tell them that you have opened your mouths to the Lord, and that you cannot, and, through grace, you will not, go back. You see with what holy and just indignation the Psalmist dismissed these from his presence, who endeavoured to entangle and draw him aside unto the service of sin, "Depart from me ye evil doers, (says he) for I will keep the command-

ments

"ments of my God," Psal. cxix. 115. You live in an ~~em~~baring time; a time wherein iniquity is abounding in an awful manner, so that it is not easy to walk with undefiled garments. We would therefore exhort all, who would give evidence that they have really given themselves to the Lord, and particularly young people, to be on their guard against the many snares which Satan is laying for them. You have need to beware of being unnecessarily in the company of those, particularly upon the Lord's days, who make little or no distinction betwixt that and any other day, in respect of their conversation: "Be not deceived, evil communications corrupt good manners." There is a snare which Satan is frequently laying, particularly in this country-side, that has a special tendency to introduce and foment immorality in practice; I mean penny-weddings, as they are called: these are frequent; and they are generally attended chiefly by persons who, in the general tenor of their conversation, seem to pay but very little regard either to religion or their own characters. And as these meetings are generally conducted, we make no scruple to affirm concerning them, that they are the trysts of Satan; and designed, by that unclean spirit, to promote the interests of the kingdom of darkness, by corrupting the morals of the unwary youth of both sexes; which hellish design of his, is far from being without success. However little some may think, (even some of whom better things might be expected) of the abounding practice of attending these marriages, and though they may perhaps scoff at hearing them spoken against; they would do well to consider, whether they can really distinguish betwixt them, as they are generally conducted, and those things which the Spirit of God designs, *revellings, running to excess of riot, chamber-*

ing and wantonness, &c. And if they cannot distinguish betwixt them and those things, they would do well to consider if they are not unworthy of the countenance of men of decency, not to speak of men professing godliness. We know that there are some who give countenance and encouragement to these meetings, who allege that their doing so does not proceed from love to the practice, or regard for the company who generally attend them; but that they do it only in charity to the persons more immediately concerned. As to this, it will readily be granted, that a charitable disposition is truly an amiable one: But as every thing is beautiful in its season, so is the duty of charity; the time to dispense it, is when persons are in distress, or cannot afford to live by following a lawful calling; but to give charity, when the direct and immediate tendency of it is to open a door for vain and sinful practices, is so far from being charity indeed, that it is a real abuse of the Divine bounty, and a making use of it as a weapon wherewith to fight against God.

Finally, We exhort you who have really given yourselves to the Lord, to use your best endeavours to excite and influence others to go and do likewise: Deal with such of your relations, as you may have reason to suspect are yet in their sins, to give themselves to the Lord. Let such as have children and servants, deal closely with them about this important matter. And encourage all about you, as you have occasion, *to yield themselves to the Lord, and enter into his sanctuary, which he hath sanctified for evermore.* Let your conversation be as becometh the gospel, that so it may be worthy of imitation; and may have a tendency to bring those who are yet strangers to religion, over to the good ways of the Lord. When the people of God are enabled

enabled to have a suitable walk and conversation before the world, it is one of those means which he is pleased to make use of for bringing over others to the paths of righteousness. In this respect his children are compared to a dew upon the grass, among the people with whom they dwell; according to what you have, Micah v. 7. "The remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people, as a dew from the Lord; as the showers upon the grass, that tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men."

Secondly, As for you who are yet in your natural state, and so have never been made to yield yourselves unto the Lord, by laying claim to him as your God in Christ by faith, and giving up yourselves unto him, to be saved by him and to serve him :

1. We exhort you to consider and lay to heart, the sinful and dangerous condition in which you are; you have joined yourselves to Satan, and are in league with hell. And this being the case, you are exposed unto the wrath to come; for that is *the wages of sin*, Rom. vi. 23. You have been called, and, it may be, some of you have been often called unto the Most High, but you have hitherto refused to exalt him; refused to give him glory, by *believing in the name of his only begotten Son*. And every call and invitation which you have got, to take him as the *Lord your God and Redeemer*, and to present yourselves as living sacrifices unto him, while they have not been complied with, have had a tendency to set you at a greater distance from him. Know then, and consider, that it is an evil and a bitter thing, that you have not only departed from the living God, by your fall in the first Adam, and your innumerable actual transgressions; but as if all this were not enough to provoke that holy One

of

of Israel to anger; you despise the remedy which he hath graciously provided for you, and refuse to come back to him, *by the new and living way which is consecrated for you, through the rent vail of the Redeemer's flesh.* Consider, we intreat you, how you expect to escape if you neglect so great a salvation. Consider that there is salvation in Christ for you, and no where else, Acts iv. 12. "Neither
 " is there salvation in any other; for there is none
 " other name under heaven, given among men,
 " whereby we must be saved." Consider, that in the way of your coming to him by faith, and casting yourselves upon the divine mercy, as it vents through him, to the honour of all the attributes and perfections of God; you have his gracious promise, *that he will in no ways cast you out.* Hence, says he, John vi. 37. "All that the Father giveth
 " me, shall come unto me; and him that cometh to
 " me, I will in no ways cast out." It is observable here, how careful our Lord Jesus is to remove every handle from our unbelief: lest any should object from the first clause of the verse, I know not if I am among the gifted company, and how then shall I come? He adds, "Him that cometh to me,
 " I will in no ways cast out." As if he had said, "Let none stand and dispute their warrant to come to me, while I am calling them to do so: Your present duty," would he say, "is to come to me believingly; and doing so, you shall most assuredly find a gracious and loving reception." And further, to encourage poor perishing sinners to come to him for life and salvation, in the faith of meeting with a hearty welcome; he tells us, that it is the will of the Father that he receive all who come unto him, John vi. 40. "This is the will of him
 " that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son,
 " and believeth on him, may have everlasting life;
 " and

“and I will raise him up at the last day.” “Be it known therefore unto you, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins : And, by him, all that believe are justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses.”

2. There are some of you, it may be, who are resolving to give yourselves to the Lord, but you think you may do it at some after period. Indeed there are few, if any, who give attendance upon divine ordinances, but have convictions at times ; some stirrings of affection, and some resolutions, however faint, to embrace Christ and take up with religion. But alas ! many quench and stifle their convictions, as did Felix ; saying to the Spirit of God, as he did to the Apostle Paul, “ Go thy way at this time, and when I have a more convenient season I will comply with thy motions.” Their resolutions of giving themselves to the Lord, are not immediate, but have a look to an after period. The sluggard saith, “ Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep,” Prov. xxiv. 33. But let me ask you, Can you be too soon interested in God as your God, and the portion of your cup, and the lot of your inheritance ? Can your souls be too soon delivered from the horrible pit and the miry clay ? Can you be too soon within the gates of the city of refuge, and so effectually secured against coming into condemnation ? And further, Are you sure that the line of your time shall reach as far as you imagine it will ? Who can tell you, but that you may be cut off by a sudden and surprising death, while *your bones are full of marrow* ; as many have been before you. And how do you know, though your life should be prolonged, but that your refusing to remember *those things*
which

which belong to your peace, in this the day of your merciful visitation, may provoke a holy God to give you up to a judicial hardness and impenitency; and to swear in his wrath, that you shall not enter into his rest?

The present time only is yours; you cannot trust to-morrow, because you know not what a day may bring forth. *Now is the accepted time, and now is the day of salvation.*

Now is the time for you to yield yourselves to the Lord, and enter into his sanctuary which he hath sanctified for ever: To enter into Christ, *the sanctuary, and the true tabernacle, which the Lord hath pitched and not man.*

Are there any of you saying, I am neither able nor willing to give myself unto the Lord? This is truly the case with every man and woman while in a state of nature:

But there is grace in the promise to make you both able and willing to do it. It is written in the Prophets,

that unto Christ *men shall come.* He makes the people *willing in the day of his power.*

And the promise in the text has a kindly look to such as you are, poor sinners of the Gentiles. “The daughter of Tyre

“shall be there with a gift, even the rich among
“the people shall intreat thy favour.”

Take the promise to the throne of grace, and plead with a gracious God, that he may be pleased to accomplish

it to each of you in particular: This is your indispensable duty, and it is in the way of duty that you

have reason to expect a saving meeting with Christ; for though the Lord can have no delight in the

prayer of the ungodly, their persons not being accepted in the Beloved; yet he is pleased to honour

his own ordinances by bestowing his grace upon sinners, while they are waiting upon him in the

use of the means of his appointment; according to his gracious promise, *Exod. xx. 24.* “In all places

“where I record my name, I will come unto thee,
“and

and presenting themselves to the Lord. 431

“and I will bless thee.” And you see that the promise is directed to every one in particular.

S E R M O N XIX.

The King's Daughter glorious within, and clothed with a Garment of wrought Gold.

PSAL. xlv. 13.

The King's Daughter is all glorious within ; her clothing is of wrought Gold.

IN the preceding verse of this Psalm, we have a pleasant prediction of the calling of the Gentiles into the fellowship of the gospel ; and so determining them, by the power of Divine grace, to present themselves as living sacrifices unto the Lord. And in the words now read, we are led to consider the great honour and dignity which the Lord confers upon all whom he brings into his family ; he takes away their *filthy garments* from them, and *clothes them with change of raiment*. He puts the righteousness of his Son upon them, and implants the grace of his Spirit within them. *Glorious things are spoken of the city of our God*, and of all her true inhabitants. “The King's daughter is all glorious within ; her clothing is of wrought gold.” In these words, 1. we may observe the Speaker, viz. JEHOVAH in the person of the Father. In the preceding verse, he directed his speech to the Church ;

Church ; and here he speaks concerning her in the way of commendation.

2. We may observe the designation he gives to the Church ; he calls her *the King's daughter* : He designs her his own daughter, ver. 10th. And here he calls her *the King's daughter* ; intimating that she is not only the Bride and Spouse of the King his Son, but likewise his Daughter : For while Christ is an Husband to his people, he is at the same time their Father. As the first Adam was both an husband and father to his wife, she being taken out of his side ; so Christ is both a Father and Husband to his people ; they are *the travel of his soul*, Isa. liii. 11. ; and may, in a kind, be said to have been taken from his side, when he slept the sleep of death.

3. We have two things affirmed concerning the King's daughter : " She is all glorious within, and " her clothing is of wrought gold."

(1.) *She is all glorious within.* The bride of Christ is fair and beautiful, not only when she walks abroad, and is exposed to the eye of the world, but even in the King's house : She is in secret what she is in public ; her heart is right with God, and sound in his statutes. She is not like a whited sepulchre, fair and beautiful without, but inwardly full of rottenness and dead mens bones : But her heart and inward man is ornamented with the gifts and graces of the holy Spirit, being made a temple for him to dwell in.

(2.) Of the bride of Christ, it is affirmed, that *her clothing is of wrought gold*. It is very costly and precious, it is of gold ; and it is a most curious and beautiful clothing ; for it is of wrought gold. A robe of *needle-work*. The Queen stands upon the King's right-hand *in the gold of Ophir*. She is like her Husband, glorious in her apparel ; being under

under the robe of his righteousness, and *clothed with the garments of salvation*. The general doctrine contained in the text is,

Doct. *That all true believers are inwardly glorious, and clothed upon with the richest apparel.* "The King's daughter is all glorious within; her clothing is of wrought gold." In speaking to this doctrine, as the Lord may be pleased to assist, we shall endeavour,

I. To offer some short account of the believer's inward glory.

II. To speak a little of the apparel wherewith the believer is clothed.

III. Make some improvement of the subject.

1. It was proposed to offer some account of the believer's inward glory. And in general, it may be observed, that the internal glory and beauty of the King's daughter consists in her begun likeness to the King himself; her inward glory is the same with regeneration, or initial sanctification. It consists in the renovation of the whole man, by the removal of the vicious qualities of the heart, and the implantation of new and gracious habits in the soul, 2 Cor. v. 17. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold all things are become new." This inward beauty is called the forming of Christ in men, Gal. iv. 19. And the image of the heavenly Adam, 1 Cor. xv. 49. It is called the making of the tree good; the bringing up of the fir-tree instead of the thorn, and the myrtle instead of the brier, &c. But more particularly,

1. All true believers have a glorious life. They live a life of justification, a life of holiness, and of sweet fellowship with God. The believer's life is a

very mysterious and hidden life; it is *hid with Christ in God*, Col. iii. 3, 4. "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. And when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." Yea, so excellent and glorious is the life of the believer, that it bears some resemblance to the life of God; as the Apostle intimates, where he speaks of all natural men, their being "alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them," Eph. iv. 18. If to be in a natural state is to be alienated from the life of God; to be in a gracious state must be to enjoy a life in some measure conformed unto the life of God, in respect of light, love, and holiness.

2. Believers have a glorious understanding and knowledge of God and divine things. They have all received a heart to know God, as their God in Christ; and that knowledge is eternal life begun. Hence says our Lord, John xvii. 3. "This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." Whenever a man is brought to see God in Christ, as his God, and so pacified toward him, notwithstanding all that he has done; that man has the begun enjoyment of eternal life, and his path shall be "as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." Whatever be the measure and degree of the believer's knowledge, it is good in its kind. It is humbling and practical, tending to holiness, and increase. The man who is favoured with the saving and experimental knowledge of God, longs for the day when he shall know, even as he also is known.

3. Believers have a glorious conformity to, and compliance with the will of God, wrought in their hearts by the holy Spirit. The believer, in so far

as he is renewed, and so far as he hath grace in exercise, desires to be denied to his own will, and to have it entirely sunk in God's will of grace and providence ; he is, in some measure, in case to adopt the language of the great Head, Psal. xl. 8. " I delight to do thy will O my God : Yea, thy law is within my heart." It is true, there is a remaining obstinacy in the heart of every believer, to submit to that good and acceptable will of God ; and a strong propensity to spurn thereat, when the corrupt inclination comes to be opposed. There is a law in the members warring against the law of the mind, by means of which, the believer often does those things which (according to the renewed part) he would not. But when this is the case, it is not the believer as such, who doth these things, but sin that dwells in him ; as the Apostle shews at large in his Epistle to the Romans, chap. 7th ; where he sets forth the different actings of the two opposite principles which are in every believer, and which he felt in his own experience. But however much the law in the members struggles against the law of the mind, in the believer, still he delights in the law of God after the inward man.

4. All true believers have a precious faith in, and a glorious love to God in Christ, implanted in their hearts by the holy Spirit. These are designed the *fruits of the Spirit* ; as being both implanted by him, and exercised under his influence. Faith is that beautiful eye that overcomes and draws the heart of Christ after it, if we may so speak. Hence says he to the spouse, Cant. iv. 9. " Thou hast ravished my heart," (or, as it is in the margin, *Thou hast taken away my heart*,) " my sister, my spouse ; thou hast ravished my heart, with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck." And that love which ever attends true faith, and is that

that by which it works, is a spark of heavenly fire kindled in the heart of the believer by the Spirit, in his shedding abroad the love of God in it, Rom. v. 5. And saith another Apostle, in the name of all true believers, 1 John iv. 19. "We love him, because he first loved us." And this love that is implanted in the heart of the believer, is very glorious in the eye of Christ. Hence is that high commendation we have of it, Cant. iv. 10. "How fair is thy love, my sister, my spouse, how much better is thy love than wine! and the smell of thy ointments, than all spices!" The believer's love is fair in itself, and beautiful in its effects; particularly as it influences the man to aim at a cheerful obedience to all God's commandments.

5. Believers have a glorious inward peace, Rom. v. 1. a peace that *passeth knowledge*, a peace that the world knows not of, and which it can neither give nor take away. It is true, indeed, that believers have a conflict within: There is in every child of God, the company of two armies, Cant. vi. 13. "the flesh lusting against the Spirit; and the Spirit against the flesh." The believer is often harassed by the fiery darts of Satan also, and persecuted by the world; because he is not of the world, but chosen out of it: Yet, notwithstanding all these enemies, he enjoys peace, peace with God, and peace with conscience. Jesus Christ is his peace, and in him he still hath it, even amidst all the tribulations he meets with in the world. Christ hath *made peace* for his people, *by the blood of his cross*; and he maintains that peace, by appearing in the presence of God for them, in the merit of his obedience and sufferings on earth.

6. Believers are possessed of a glorious joy and spiritual gladness. They stand, by faith, upon the sure foundation which God hath laid in Zion, and
rejoice

rejoice in the hope of the glory of God, Rom. v. 2. Every true believer has the seed of true, solid, and permanent joy sown in his heart: And though this joy is much interrupted, as to the actual exercise of it, yet the root of it still remains in the believer; and the reason and ground of it being wholly without himself, it is therefore always the same. He has constant cause to rejoice, and is sometimes admitted to the actual exercise of joy, to a degree that is unspeakably great and full of glory, 1 Pet. i. 8. "Whom (*viz.* Christ) having not seen, ye love; "in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable, and "full of glory." When the believer is at any time brought to the exercise of this joy, he is incapable of expressing the sweetness and satisfaction which he experiences, in such a manner as to make others fully to understand it: As we see in the case of the two disciples in their way to Emaus; who, after Christ had been communing with them, rather compared hearts than notes, saying one to another, Luke xxiv. 38 "did not our heart burn "within us, while he talked with us by the way, "and while he opened to us the Scriptures?" And this joy is said to be full of glory; in regard it is a foretaste of that glorious joy into which all true believers are one day to enter.

7. and *lastly*, Believers are possessed of a meek and humble frame of heart and spirit, which is a great ornament to the soul in the sight of God; and is accordingly said to be of *great price* in his esteem, 1 Pet. iii. 4. The humble person is the man to whom the Lord looks, and with whom he delights to dwell. "He giveth grace to the humble, "but he knoweth the proud afar off." All true believers have learned Christ, and learned of him; and being thus privileged, they have been kindly humbled

humbled before God, and led off from self-wisdom, self-righteousness, and self-will ; to a resting upon Jesus alone for salvation, as “ made of God unto “ them, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and “ redemption.” And for a person to be brought away from self, and his being really determined to build his hope of eternal life solely upon Jesus Christ, the foundation which God hath laid in Zion, is that wherein the very essence of gospel humility consists. Whatever appearances of humility a person may attain to, yet he is never a humble man in the sight of God, until he is brought to renounce all legal confidences ; and to rest solely upon the obedience, sufferings, and death of the Lord Jesus Christ, for access to and acceptance with God. Several other things might have been mentioned here, as going to make up the believer's inward beauty and glory : Such as, a holy filial fear of God, which has his goodness, as displayed in Christ, for the object of it ; zeal for the advancement of his declarative glory in the world ; the lively hope of salvation ; the Lord taking pleasure in those that hope in his mercy ; long-suffering and patience under the cross, &c. but upon these things we shall not insist, but pass on to the next thing proposed in the method, which was,

II. To speak a little of the rich apparel, wherewith the King's daughter, or the true believer, is clothed. And in speaking to this head,

First, We may enquire what the believer's clothing is ; and,

Secondly, Speak a little of its excellency, which is pointed forth in its being said to be of *wrought gold*.

I. It was proposed to enquire what the believer's clothing is, or what we are to understand by it.

And

And as to this, it may be observed, in general, that there is a two-fold robe wherewith the King's daughter is clothed. There is the robe of IMMANUEL's *righteousness*, which he wrought out in her law-room and stead. And there is the robe of *holiness*. The first of these garments is invisible, the world does not see it. And as for the latter, so far as it is seen and observed by carnal men, it is very far from recommending the believer to their esteem and regard: for graceless men do not only hate the image of God, in his own people, but even his picture, if we may so speak in the hypocrite; they cannot endure holiness, nor what has the appearance of it. When profane men cry out against hypocrisy, or what they take to be so, it cannot be on account of any real dislike of it, however abominable it really is in itself; but because it seems to bear at least some resemblance of holiness. Now, though the believer's clothing may be expressive both of the surety-righteousness of the Lord Jesus, and the garment of inherent holiness; we think the first of these is chiefly intended in the text: Should it then be enquired wherein that righteousness of our Lord Jesus, which is believer's clothing, consists? We answer,

It consists in the holiness of his human nature, in the perfect conformity of his life to the preceptive part of the Divine law, and the complete satisfaction which he gave to the justice of God by his sufferings and death. Our Lord Jesus having assumed the human nature, holy and absolutely free from the least taint or alloy of sin; believers have the holiness of their nature, which they lost in Adam, restored to them in him. And he having perfectly fulfilled the law in their room and stead, they are furnished with a most satisfactory answer to all its demands by what he has done: For he

“ is

“ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth,” Rom. x. 4. And he having suffered for the offences of his people, justice has no claim upon the man that believes in him. JEHOVAH, the righteous Judge, is pleased with what he has done; yea, he is more than pleased, he is *well pleased for his righteousness sake*, as the Prophet Isaiah declares, chap. xlii. 21. “ The Lord is well pleased for his righteousness sake; he will magnify the law, and make it honourable.” The justice of God smells a savour of rest, in the sacrifice that Christ hath offered, Eph. v. ii. And therefore, it has nothing to except against the man or woman whom it sees claiming the benefit of it by a true and lively faith. Now, this perfect righteousness of our glorious IMMANUEL may be called the believer's clothing, in regard it serves all these purposes unto the soul that clothing does unto the body.

(1.) Clothes were first provided for men to cover their nakedness. Moses tells us, that the Lord God made coats of skins for clothing our first parents, Gen. iii. 21. When once they fell by their transgression, they were ashamed to appear before God, because they were naked, chap. iii. 10. And if these coats were made of the skins of beasts which Adam offered in sacrifice to God, as typical of Christ, upon his receiving the promise of the Messiah, as some think they were; then they might be some way significative of his righteousness, by which alone the shame of our spiritual nakedness is covered from the eye of a holy God. Our natural state and condition is most affectingly set forth by the Spirit of God, alluding to a new-born infant cast out to the open field, destitute of all succour and help, Ezek. xvi. 4, 5. We are in our blood naturally, and exposed to shame and disgrace:
and

and in ver. 8. we see how the nakedness of the soul comes to be covered; it is by IMMANUEL's spreading the skirt of his righteousness over it. Hence says he, "When I passed by thee, and "looked upon thee; behold, thy time was the "time of love, and I spread my skirt over thee, "and covered thy nakedness; yea, I swear unto "thee, and entered into covenant with thee, "saith the Lord God, and thou becamest mine."

(2.) Clothing is for the defence and safety of the body, from these storms and tempests to which it may at any time be exposed. Well, the soul of every man and woman, who is in a natural state, is exposed to the storm and tempest of divine wrath; and there is no safety and preservation from it, but under the covert of the blood and righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ. He is the only city of refuge, and the sole covert from storm and from rain, Isa. iv. 6. When once a man is brought under the wing of the Redeemer's righteousness, he is safe; safe from the curse of the broken law, the sword of justice, the guilt and dominion of sin, the slavery of Satan, the sting of all outward trouble; from death, considered as a penal evil, and safe from the wrath that is to come.

(3.) Clothing is for ornament to the body, as well as for its preservation; and so the believer is not only safe under the robe of IMMANUEL's righteousness, but he is thereby ornamented in the sight of God, and rendered lovely and acceptable in his presence: Hence saith the Apostle, Eph. i. 6. "He "hath made us accepted in the Beloved." The righteousness of Christ is that fine linen, clean and white, Rev. xix. 8. in which the believer appears in the sight of God, *beautiful as Tirzah, and comely as Jerusalem.* This is the clothing of which

the Church sings so sweetly, saying, Isa. lxi. 10.
 "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall
 "be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me
 "with the garments of salvation, he hath covered
 "me with the robe of righteousness; as a bride-
 "groom decketh himself with ornaments, and as
 "a bride adorneth herself with her jewels." And
 as the believer's clothing is fair and beautiful, so it
 is durable and lasting, yea everlasting, Dan. ix. 24.
 It was from everlasting in design; and it is put up-
 on the King's daughter in the day of her espousals,
 never to be taken off again: Hence it is called *the*
gift of righteousness, Rom. v. 17. It is a gift that
 God will never recal, for it will continue to be the
 eternal ground of the believer's standing before the
 throne of glory with acceptance; and not the gar-
 ment of his inherent holiness, even after it is com-
 plete: As we see in the answer which John received
 from one of the elders, when he asked him,
 "What are these which are arrayed in white robes?
 "and whence come they?" Rev. vii. 13.; says he,
 ver. 14th "These are they which come out of
 "great tribulation, and have washed their robes,
 "and made them white in the blood of the Lamb;
 "and therefore are they before the throne of God,
 "and serve him day and night in his temple."
 They are ~~not~~ before the throne of God, because
 of their sufferings for his name's sake, nor because
 their garment of holiness is complete: But they
 are there, because they "have washed their robes,
 "and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."
 The Lord makes the afflictions of his people a pre-
 paratory mean of their being brought before the
 throne, 2 Cor. iv. 17, 18. And "without holiness
 "no man shall see the Lord," Heb. xii. 14. But
 it is the blood of the Lamb that is the procuring
 cause of their admission into, and of their everlast-
 ing

ing enjoyment of the inheritance of the saints in light.

Finally, Clothing is sometimes used for distinction. Hence Tamar is said to have had a garment of diverse colours upon her, 2 Sam. xiii. 18.; and the reason is there given; *for with such robes were the king's daughters, that were virgins, apparelled.* All true believers are daughters of the King; they are chaste virgins, being espoused to his Son. They are a peculiar people; they dwell alone, and are not reckoned among the nations. They are peculiar in many respects, and eminently so in respect of their clothing. It is the peculiar privilege of believers to be under the covert of IMMANUEL'S righteousness; and to be so, is common to them all: For as this righteousness "is unto all, to whom the gospel comes, so it is really upon all those who believe, whether Jew or Gentile, for there is no difference," Rom. iii. 22. To be clothed with the righteousness of Christ then, is the distinguishing privilege of the men *whom the King delighteth to honour.*

Secondly, It was proposed on this head, to speak a little of the excellency of the believer's clothing, which is pointed forth in its being said to be of wrought gold. And the *righteousness* of Christ being compared to a *garment of wrought gold*, may import,

1. That it is most precious and excellent. It is of an infinite value and worth, being the *righteousness of God*, as it is designed, Rom. i. 17. It is a righteousness of God's providing. The glorious Person who wrought out this righteousness is God, Rom. ix. 5.; and the applier of it is God the Holy Ghost. The blood of Jesus is precious blood, being the blood of God, Acts xx. 28. It is precious in itself, 1 Pet. i. 18. and of unspeakable worth and value:

value to the believer; being the price of his redemption, the meritorious cause of his justification, access to and acceptance with God, and that by which his right and title to the heavenly inheritance is effectually secured.

2. That it is of a durable and lasting nature. Gold is durable, and will abide the fire; so the righteousness of Christ is durable clothing, Dan. ix. 24. This righteousness, as hath been already observed, lasts with the believer all his days; is of manifold use to him in every step of his journey through the wilderness of this world, as it affords him an answer to every challenge of conscience, and every accusation that Satan brings against him; and it is the immoveable foundation upon which he shall stand before God for ever with acceptance.

3. The *righteousness* of Christ being compared to a *garment of wrought gold*, may import its beauty and perfection; it is a garment for glory and for beauty. It is a beautiful contexture: Hence compared to *fine linen, clean and white*, Rev. xix. 16. It is most beautifying and ornamenting to the soul; it covers sin, and hides the deformity of the soul from the eye of justice; causing the man who was before *lying among the pots*, to appear in the presence of God, "as a dove, whose wings are covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold," Psal. lxxviii. 13. For however many spots are to be seen upon the believer, in regard of the imperfection of his sanctification; yet being under the covert of the blood and righteousness of Jesus, the righteous Judge looks upon him with a pleasant countenance, Psal. xi. 7. and will never enter into judgment with him. Nay, in respect of his state, he is as righteous before God, and as much accepted in his sight as ever he can be; that moment that he is clothed with the garment of wrought gold:

and clothed with a Garment of wrought Gold. 445

gold: Hence says he to the Spouse, Cant. iv. 7.
"Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in
"thee."

Finally, The surety-righteousness of our Lord Jesus, may be compared to a garment of wrought gold, to denote the exact and perfect manner in which he hath fulfilled the righteousness of the law. *Her clothing is of wrought gold*, that is, she is clothed with the most perfect and finished robe: Hence in the following verse, it is called *raiment of needlework*. The believer's clothing is wrought out by him, whose *hands are like gold rings set with beryl*, Cant. v. 14. Our Lord Jesus is a most perfect Worker; *he is a rock, and his work is perfect*. In all that he hath done, in virtue of his surety-undertaking, he hath acted from the most pure and perfect principles, and walked by a perfect rule; the law of his God was in his heart, Psal. xl. 7. He performed all his work to a proper end, and in the fit season. His righteousness is a garment most curiously wrought, and the ends designed by it are most effectually secured; namely, the glory of God, and the eternal salvation of as many as the Father hath given him. In a word, he hath done all things well; done all things in such a manner as to gain the fullest approbation of him, whose judgment is according to truth; which hearty approbation he is declaring to us in the gospel, saying, Matth. iii. 17. "This is my beloved Son in
"whom I am well pleased."

We now proceed to make some improvement of the subject, which was the *third* and *last* thing proposed in the method. And,

1. The *first* use of the doctrine may be for information.

(1.) Hence see what a great and wonderful change, union to the person of Christ makes in the
case

case of a poor guilty polluted sinner. The man who was before guilty, and so obnoxious to the wrath of God, lying under the condemnatory sentence of the broken law; and all as an unclean thing, in the sight of a holy, just and righteous God; is, upon his being interested in Christ by faith, justified from all things from which he could never have been justified by the law of Moses. His filthy garments are taken away from him, *and he is clothed with change of raiment.* He is under the clothing of wrought gold, that covering of the chariot of the wood of Lebanon, through which the smallest drop of Divine wrath can never penetrate. And he is also beautified and made glorious within, by the regenerating and sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit. The good work is begun in him; and he that hath begun it, will most assuredly make it perfect: As the Apostle declares to the Philippians, and in them to all true believers, chap. i. 6. "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus."

(2.) Hence see, that imputed righteousness and inherent holiness go hand in hand together; where the one is, there is also the other. *The King's daughter is all glorious within; her clothing is of wrought gold.* The clothing of wrought gold which is put upon her in the first day of believing, is altogether different from the implantation of grace in the heart; but these go inseparably together. For whosoever is justified, he is also sanctified; and whosoever is sanctified, is most assuredly justified: So that every one who hath experienced a real internal change wrought upon his heart, may conclude, that he is under the robe of wrought gold. And as our sanctification is the surest evidence which we can have of our justification, so no man

has

has reason to conclude that he is in Christ, and so in a justified state, if he is not *born of water and of the spirit*. For "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away, and all things are become new."

(3.) Hence see, what a precious thing the gospel is; and how highly it ought to be had in estimation, by all who enjoy it in purity: It reveals and brings the clothing of wrought gold near to the naked and starving soul, Isa. xlv. 11, 12. It presents us with the fatted calf for food, the river of the water of life for drink, and the best robe for clothing. The gospel richly deserves our highest esteem, for the sake of its glorious Author; upon account of the subject-matter of it, and the glad tidings of great joy which it brings to our ears. It is a message of peace, a word of salvation, a *faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation*; being a declaration that *Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners*, of whom the very chief are not excepted.

(4.) Hence see, that when one grace is implanted in the heart, there all grace is to be found. *The King's daughter is all glorious within*. The believer's beauty overspreads the whole man. The Holy Spirit in regeneration, works an universal change; the soul is renewed in every faculty; the vicious qualities thereof being removed, and gracious principles and qualities being implanted. The change is indeed but imperfect, in respect of degrees; but as to parts, it is universal and complete. The new man is formed in all his members; although he does not arrive at the measure of the stature of a perfect man in Christ, until mortality is swallowed up of life.

(5.) We may hence see the difference between the true believer and the hypocrite. The latter may have as fair an outside as the former; but he has no inward glory: His only concern is to have the
outside

outside of the cup and plater clean; but the hidden man of his heart is like the vineyard of the sluggard. There is a treasure of wickedness in the heart of the wicked; and although he may have a form of godliness, yet he is void of the power thereof: There is no conformity betwixt his heart and the outward profession of religion which he makes. But every believer is glorious within, *an Israelite indeed*; in whom there is no allowed, no approved guile.

Finally, Hence see, who they are that are truly the excellent ones of the earth. They are not these whom the world generally takes to be so; nor those who are most disposed to account themselves so: but the truly excellent and honourable persons are those who are clothed in the robe of wrought gold, the embroidered garment of IMMANUEL's righteousness, and made glorious within. These are the men whom the King hath highly advanced, and whom he delights to honour. They are precious in his sight, and therefore honourable, Isa. xliii. 4. He has given infinitely more than Egypt, Ethiopia and Seba, for their ransom, even the precious blood of his eternal Son. Much is laid out upon them in the present world; and it is impossible for the tongues of men or angels to tell what is in reserve for them in the world to come. Hence we find the Psalmist crying out with holy wonder and admiration, Psal. xxxi. 19. "O how great is the goodness which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee: which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!" It is true, would the Psalmist say, thy goodness often appears to be hid from thy people now; but thou hast laid it up for them in thine own breast, in thine own eternal purpose and love-design toward them; to be brought from thence

as from a treasure in due time : Thou *hast* wrought it for them, or thou *wilt* work it for them ; the past time being put for the future, as is very frequent with the Hebrews : Thou wilt most assuredly confer goodness, inconceivably great, upon those who fear and love thee. And thou wilt do it before the sons of men, that is, publicly, in the view of the world ; their very enemies seeing, and admiring, and envying it, but not being able to hinder it.

Secondly, This subject may be improved in an use of trial and examination. It concerns all who are capable of reflecting upon the case and frame of their own souls, to try how matters are with them, both as to their state and exercise. You may try yourselves by what was said upon the first head, as we cannot propose to insist at any considerable length at this time. Only in a few words,

If you are clothed with IMMANUEL's righteousness :

(1.) We think you have seen your need of this clothing ; you have seen that you were naked ; that you were verily guilty before God, and so exposed to the tempest of his awful indignation, on account of your sin, original and actual ; and you have really been persuaded, that nothing could defend you from the fury of the storm of Divine wrath, but this *garment of wrought gold*.

(2.) If you are really under the clothing of wrought gold, you make but a very small account of your own righteousness ; however much you may have been disposed to value it before. Now that you are brought under the covert of the blood and righteousness of the glorious Redeemer, you have, upon the matter, done with your own righteousness, which was of the law ; as Elisha did with his own garments, when he got hold of the mantle

of Elijah, 2 Kings ii. 12, 13. You have rent the garment of your own righteousness, and laid it aside; you have seen it not only to be of no real use to you, but you have seen it to be really hurtful, and in the highest degree pernicious to your souls. You have seen it to be so far from beautifying the soul in the sight of God, as that it only renders it the more vile and loathsome to the eye of his holiness; and so you have been brought to say with the Church, "We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags."

(3.) Are you *glorious within*? Hath the Spirit of God wrought a saving change upon your hearts? Those who are *justified in the name of the Lord*, are also *sanctified by the Spirit of our God*, 1 Cor. vi. 11. Do you really desire to be acquainted with truth in the hidden part? And is the opposition which you find in your hearts to the holy Spirit, in his sanctifying work, arising from remaining corruption in them, really your burden? This was the case with the great Apostle of the Gentiles, as you see Rom. vii. 24. and it is the case with all true believers in some measure and degree.

Finally, If you are really *clothed with the robe of wrought gold*, and have begun to partake of the *beauty of holiness*, then you are careful to maintain good works. If the tree is really made good by regenerating grace, and your obligation to the law, as a covenant of works, cancelled; you will be concerned to have an impartial regard for all God's commandments: For he that is righteous cannot fail to endeavour to act righteously. And saith the Apostle, 1 John ii. 29. "Every one that doth righteousness, is born of God." In one word, if you are clothed with the robe of righteousness, and made glorious within by the regenerating and sanctifying

sanctifying influences of the holy Spirit; then your obedience to the royal law of Christ will flow from love to him, and delight in the law as fulfilled by him, and given to you as the rule of your duty. The legalist and the hypocrite may, in many things, conform to the letter of the law; but they can have no heart-love either to the Lawgiver or to the law. The motives which prevail with the legalist to yield obedience to the law, are fear of punishment, and a servile hope of reward. And the hypocrite's chief motive to obedience is, that he may be seen and approved of by men. But the true believer is constrained to obedience by the love of Christ; and it is not the praise of men, but of God, which he labours to attain: Being really persuaded, that he is only a Jew indeed whose *circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit; and whose praise is not of men, but of God*, Rom. ii. 29. Farther, you will be concerned to eye the authority of Christ, enjoining the duties which you perform. You are not only concerned to do that which is good; but also to do it as, and because it is commanded of God; knowing, that so much the more as you are influenced by the authority of God in every duty which you perform, so much the more of reasonable service is there in it. You desire to have the declarative glory of God advanced by every duty you perform. As the hypocrite and the legalist act from self, so the current of their obedience can rise no higher than the fountain from which it springs: As self is the spring, so self is the end. But as the believer acts from supernatural principles, so he aims at terminating all his actions in the advancement of the honour and glory of God. He is, moreover, denied to his duties; he makes no account of them in the matter of his acceptance with God. Although, in so far as he is suitably

suitably exercised, he is as tender of the honour of the Divine law, as if his obedience thereto was to procure him eternal life; yet he has no more dependence upon his duties and best performances, in point of merit, than he has upon the most highly aggravated of his sins and provocations. He knows no other foundation whereupon to build his hope of eternal life, but that which *God hath laid in Zion*, which is *Jesus Christ*: And he knows, that every look toward the law for life and salvation, is an attempt to frustrate the grace of God; and a saying on the matter, that Christ died without a cause.

The *last* use of the doctrine shall be in a word of exhortation. And,

(1.) Let all who are clothed with the garment of wrought gold, and have their sanctification begun, be exhorted to be humble and thankful; they have great reason to be so. Happy are the people who are in such a case as this. Believers, he that is Mighty hath done great things for you, and in you; and *holy is his name*. Your first father left you orphans, and God himself is become your Father: You were naked, and he has clothed you with the *robe of righteousness, and the garments of salvation*: You were black as the *tents of Kedar*, and he hath made you comely as *the curtains of Solomon*: You were poor and miserable, but now you inherit substance: You were in a state of the vilest slavery, but you are now brought into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. Be exhorted to keep your garments clean. It is true, your upper garment (if we may so speak) cannot be defiled; it can receive no stain. The righteousness of your glorious Surety is your upper garment; and being inherently in him, and upon you only by imputation, it is ever the same; and its beauty can
never

never be impaired. But it is otherwise with respect to the robe of holiness, as we see in the case of many of the most eminent of the saints, who have sadly defiled their garments; and their having done so is left upon record, not for our imitation, but for our caution. Consider, that untenderness in your walk and conversation, cannot fail to produce the worst effects; it must tend eminently to the dishonour of God, the grief of the godly, and the hardening of the wicked in their sinful courses: And it will provoke the Lord to suspend the testimony of his Spirit, unto the truth of your interest in him as your God and Father.

Be exhorted to keep the eye of faith fixed upon Christ and his righteousness, as the alone ground and foundation of all your consolation; and trust him with the perfecting of your beauty, by the renewing and sanctifying influences of the holy Spirit. Trust to his gracious promise, *that he will not turn away from you, to do you good.* Jer. xl. 32. but that he will so manage and over-rule all the times and seasons that pass over you, whether prosperous or adverse, as that they shall all work for your real good and advantage in the issue. For *he is a rock, and his work is perfect, and blessed are all those who put their trust in him.*

(2.) We exhort you who are yet in your sins, to consider the woful case and condition which you are in: You are naked, and quite destitute of any covering that can screen you from the storm and tempest of Divine wrath; to which you are exposed by your original sin, and your numberless actual transgressions: You are guilty, and so liable to punishment: You are filthy and polluted; *all as an unclean thing*; and therefore you can have no communion with a God of infinite holiness, while you continue in that loathsome condition. You are slaves
to

to sin and Satan : And if you depart this life, strangers to Christ, and the justifying and sanctifying grace of God in him, your eternal state will be beyond all expression dreadful. “ It is a fearful thing “ to fall into the hands of the living God ;” *for according to his fear, so is his wrath*, Psal. xc. 11. And his wrath will lie heavy, in an eminent manner, upon gospel-despisers ; they will have no cloak for their sin, in the day of final count and reckoning. In that day, it will be intolerable for every son and daughter of Adam, whose names shall not be found written in the Lamb’s book of life : But it will be more intolerable for those who shall be found to have had Christ, and grace and glory with him, in their offer ; but rejected the compassionate counsel of God against themselves. Be exhorted, then, to embrace the Son, lest he be angry ; receive him as God’s unspeakable gift to you. “ This “ is his commandment, that ye believe on the name “ of his only begotten Son.” It is only in the way of believing in Christ that you can be justified, Gal. ii. 16. and receive the Spirit of holiness from him, John vii. 38. For although the righteousness of God our Redeemer is unto all who hear the gospel, it is upon none actually but those who believe, Rom. ii. 22. And “ by “ him all that believe are justified from all things “ from which they could not be justified by the law “ of Moses.” O ! consider, that the *robe of righteousness* and the *garments of salvation* are brought near to every one of you ; they are brought within the reach of an applying faith : And that faith whereby you are called to put them on, is the *gift of God*, Eph. ii. 8. Whatever you have been or done, the worst that can be said of you, while *prisoners of hope*, is, that you are *stout-hearted* and *far from righteousness* ; and to such God brings near his *righteousness*,

righteousness, Isa. xlvi. 12, 13. Although your guilt be great, there is a fulness of merit in the blood of Jesus to remove it. Though you be vile and polluted in the sight of God, and would be so in your own eyes, did you really see yourselves in the glass of the holy law ; yet there is abundance of efficacy in the Spirit of Christ, to cleanse you from *all filthiness of the flesh and spirit*. “ The blood of Jesus was shed for the remission of the sins of many,” even of as many as will take the benefit of it by faith. Many have been determined to do so already ; and he is waiting that he may be gracious, even to you who have hitherto made light of his grace and kindness. Oh ! then, while he is yet saying unto you, “ I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean ; from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you,” Ezek. xxxvi. 25. be concerned to take him at his word, and plead for the accomplishment of the promise ; saying with the Psalmist, Psal. li. 7. “ Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean ; wash me, and I shall be whiter than the snow.”

S E R.

S E R M O N XX

The Bride of CHRIST brought home to her
Royal HUSBAND, and the Spiritual Mar-
riage consummated.

PSAL. xlv. 14.

*She shall be brought unto the King in raiment of
needle-work: The Virgins her Companions that
follow her shall be brought unto thee.*

GOD's great design, in all the dispensations,
both of his grace and providence, is, to bring
many sons to glory; by the Captain of their salva-
tion, whom he hath made perfect through suffer-
ing: And these sons and daughters, whom he hath
fore-ordained to glory, are, in time, clothed with
the garment of their elder Brother's righteousness,
and beautified by the Spirit of holiness; and so
made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the
saints in light. And, being made meet for it, they
shall most certainly be brought to the everlasting
possession of it. "She shall be brought unto the
King in raiment of needle-work: The virgins
her companions that follow her shall be brought
unto thee." Although this and the following
verse might safely be viewed as setting forth
the great happiness which persons are brought
to the enjoyment of, even in this life, upon
their union with Christ; as also, the spiritual joy
that takes place on all hands when sinners are
espoused to the Saviour; and likewise, the solid
footing which we have to expect, that there shall
be a perpetual gathering of the people to the blef-

sed

fed Shiloh, until the last elect vessel is brought in; yet, as they seem, at least ultimately, to have a respect to the consummation of the spiritual marriage, and the introduction of the Bride to the full possession of that glory which the royal Bridegroom hath prepared for her, we shall discourse a little from them in this view. And in the words presently under consideration, observe that,

1. Both the person speaking, and those concerning whom he speaks, are manifestly the same as in the preceding verse; only the King's daughter is here supposed to be attended by the virgins her companions: So that, by the *King's daughter*, pointed out in the pronoun *she*, we may understand the Church in general, or the whole body of believers; and by the *virgins her companions*, may be meant, either particular churches, or particular believers. The King's daughter, and the virgins her companions that follow her, all go to constitute the Bride the Lamb's wife. The *virgins* the *Bride's companions*, are words much of the same import with those verse 9th; where the same persons, who are here called the *companions* of the Bride, are designed her *honourable women*. The Bride is distinguished from the virgins her companions, for the beauty of the song; there being a manifest allusion in it to great personages, who have their maids of honour to attend upon them, particularly on their marriage-day, Matth. xxv. 6.

2. We have something affirmed concerning the King's daughter, and the virgins her companions that follow her. They *shall be brought unto the King*; that is, they shall be admitted to the complete and everlasting enjoyment of God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, as the portion of their cup, and the lot of their inheritance. They shall be with him, and they shall be like him, and so their

joy shall be full. “She shall be brought unto the King: The virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee.”

3. We may observe the Bride’s clothing where with she is adorned, by and for her royal husband; it is of needle-work. This raiment is the robe of imputed righteousness, and the garment of imparted holiness; of which we discoursed at some length, when speaking on the preceding verse. The righteousness of the glorious Bridegroom is raiment for glory and for beauty; and it is that, we apprehend, which is chiefly pointed at in the text. For although the inward beauty and glory of the Bride will be perfect, at the consummation of the spiritual marriage; yet, not that, but the Surety-righteousness of the glorious Bridegroom, will be the canopy under which she shall appear before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.

4. We may observe to whom these words are spoken, namely, *the King: She shall be brought unto the King. They shall be brought unto thee.*—JEHOVAH the Father, speaks these words to JEHOVAH the Son: And so we may consider them as a promise to Christ, that he shall see his seed; not only in their regeneration, justification, and begun sanctification, but likewise in their complete glorification. “She shall be brought unto the King,” as the Lord God brought the woman to the man, Gen. ii. 22. which was a type of the mystical marriage between Christ and his Church. None come to Christ in time but those whom the Father brings; and all those whom he brings to him in time, he will bring them to be with him through eternity.

5. and lastly, We have the certainty of this great and glorious event respecting the King’s daughter, and the virgins her companions that follow her. “She shall be brought unto the King:—” The

The virgins her companions that follow her shall "be brought unto thee." All who were given to Christ from eternity, in the council of peace, the Father draws them unto him in time: And all who are drawn to him in time, shall be admitted to be with him for ever, to behold his glory; in answer to that pressing demand of his, founded upon the merit of his obedience and sacrifice on earth, John xvii. 24. "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me; for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world."

The general doctrine of the text is:

Doct. *That the royal Bride of Christ shall be received into the eternal enjoyment of him, as her glorious husband.* "She shall be brought unto the King in raiment of needle-work: The virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee." For method, we shall,

I. Inquire, Who they are, who shall be brought unto the King; or, who shall be admitted into the eternal enjoyment of him.

II. Speak a little of the Bride of Christ, her being brought unto him in the day of the consummation of the spiritual marriage.

III. Illustrate the truth of the doctrine; or shew that all who are espoused to Christ, *the King of Glory*, in time, shall be brought to the enjoyment of him through eternity.

IV. Apply. And all is proposed under Divine aid and direction.

I. The *first* thing proposed in the method was, To inquire who they are that shall be brought unto the King, or that shall be admitted into the eternal

eternal enjoyment of him. And the character of those who shall be brought into the eternal enjoyment of the three-one God in Christ; may be gathered from the text and context.

1. They shall all be brought to be with Christ in a state of eternal happiness, who have been made to hear his voice in the gospel; and have been determined from the heart, to give the obedience of faith unto that gracious call we have ver. 10. "Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear: Forget also thine own people, and thy father's house." They shall all be brought unto the King, who have been brought, in the day of his power, to give up with the law as a Covenant of Works; and betake themselves unto the Covenant of Grace, upon safe and honourable terms, viz. in their presenting the surety-righteousness of Christ unto it, as a complete answer unto all the demands which it had to make upon them.

2. All those who have been determined to match with the King, shall be brought home unto the eternal enjoyment of him. *The Queen shall stand at the King's right hand,* as you see ver. 9. Would any desire to know, whether they shall be admitted into the palace of the King, in that day when he shall appear to consummate the spiritual marriage with his espoused Bride? Then let them examine and try themselves, whether they were ever really determined to give heart and hand unto him; let them try whether or not they ever had the solid experience of such a promise being accomplished to them; as that we have Hos. ii. 16. "It shall be at that day, saith the Lord, that thou shalt call me Ishi, and shalt call me no more Baali." If you have been really determined to lay claims to him as your Husband by faith, and if he is indeed become a covering to your eyes from all other lords and lovers;

lovers; then you may warrantably take it as a sweet and comfortable evidence, that you shall be for ever with the Lord.

3. All those *shall be brought unto the King, who* are clothed upon with the raiment of needle-work, the garment of wrought gold. Every man who hath been brought by the power of Divine grace, to renounce his own righteousness, which is of the law, and to put on the Lord Jesus, by receiving and resting upon him, and what he hath done and suffered, as the perfecting end of the law for righteousness to him in particular, shall be brought unto the King. Try then, if ever you were determined, under the sweetly constraining influences of the spirit of faith, to call Jesus Christ, *the Lord your Righteousness*, Jer. xxiii. 6. Have you got such a discovery of your own righteousness, as that you are not only convinced that it is altogether insufficient to cover your spiritual nakedness before God, and defend you from the storm of Divine wrath, but that it is really a filthy and defiling garment? And have you got such a discovery of the surety-righteousness of our glorious IMMANUEL, as that you really desire, above all things, to be found in it; desiring to know nothing else, as the ground of your access to, and acceptance in the sight of God? Then it is a strong evidence that you are among the happy number that shall be brought unto the King, as the lot of their inheritance, and the everlasting portion of their cup.

4. All who are made glorious within, shall be brought unto the King. *The King's daughter is all glorious within*, filled with truth in the hidden part; being created anew in Christ Jesus, and saved by the washing of regeneration. To whomsoever the righteousness of Christ is imputed by God the Father, unto them holiness is also imparted by Je-

HOVAH the Spirit, 2 Cor. v. 17. "If any man be
 "in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are
 "passed away, behold all things are become new."
If any man be in Christ, that is, united to his per-
 son by faith, and so under the covert of his righte-
 ousness; then he is a new man, and a partaker of
 that holiness, wherein our spiritual make and for-
 mation for God and his service doth consist, Isa.
 xliii. 21. ; and without which no man can see the
 Lord, Heb. xii. 14. And as no man can see the
 Lord without holiness, so all who are really made
 partakers of it shall see him, and be for ever with
 him, Matth. v. 8. "Blessed are the pure in heart,
 "for they shall see God." He that hath a pure
 heart, and clean hands, shall ascend into the hill of
 God, and have a firm and everlasting abode in
 his holy place.

5. The daughter of the King shall enter into the
 King's palace. The children of the King; those
 who, according to God's abundant mercy, are be-
 gotten again to a lively hope, through the resur-
 rection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 1 Pet. i. 4.
 and translated from the power of darkness, and
 brought into the kingdom of God's dear Son, Col.
 i. 14. the kingdom of grace, they shall be received
 into the kingdom of glory also. You may then try
 yourselves, whether or not you have received the
 nature and disposition of the sons and daughters of
 the living God; and whether you have received
 the Spirit of God, as the spirit of adoption, ena-
 bling you to cry, *Abba, Father*. God will bring
 all these to the everlasting possession of the heav-
 enly Canaan, whom he brings forward to call him
 Father, in the language of faith; according to that
 gracious promise which you have Jer. iii. 19.
 "But I said, how shall I put thee among the child-
 "dren, and give thee a pleasant land, a goodly
 "heritage

“heritage of the hosts of nations? And I said,
“Thou shalt call me my Father, and shalt not turn
“away from me.”

Finally, The virgins, the companions of the
Bride, shall be brought unto the King. “She
“shall be brought unto the King in raiment of
“needle-work: The virgins her companions that
“follow her shall be brought unto thee.” All
who are chaste virgins to Christ, as the Apostle de-
signs the believing Corinthians, 2 Cor. xi. 2. All
who give him their loves, and are the companions
of the Bride; delighting in her company and fel-
lowship, esteeming her highly in love, for the sake
of her Royal Bridegroom, and on the account of
her relation to him, and the representation she
makes of his holiness and purity, in her walk and
conversation in the world: All these, we say, shall
be brought unto the King. In one word here, all
those who are now with the King, in respect of
faith and affection, have their conversation in hea-
ven, have their affections set upon things which
are above; and who, Moses-like, value and esteem
the very worst of things about Christ, and the way
of godliness, above the best things of a present
world; they shall be brought unto the King in
their own persons in due time, and have their ever-
lasting abode in the presence of his glory, where
their joy shall be full.

II. The *second* thing proposed in the method,
was to speak a little of the Bride of Christ, her
being brought unto him in the day of the consum-
mation of the spiritual marriage. And here it
may be observed, that there is a threefold period
at which believers are brought unto Christ, *viz.* in
the day of their first conversion, when they are
espoused unto him. In the day wherein they put
off the clay tabernacle, then they are brought unto
him

him in respect of their souls. Hence we read of the spirits of just men made perfect, Heb. xii. 23. And they shall be brought unto him, in their whole persons, in the day of the general resurrection; when he will "change their vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body." Now, although, as hath been already observed, we apprehend that the words of the text (which may be viewed as a promise to Christ, of his seeing his seed) may have a respect to all these periods; we shall only consider them a little at present, as referring to the last of them: When the saints shall be gathered unto Christ in one entire body, and entered upon the full and everlasting possession of the inheritance of the saints in light. And their being brought unto Christ at this period, will be found to imply the following things; such as,

1. Their being made meet for the immediate enjoyment of God. There is a meetness for being with Christ in heaven, absolutely needful previous to our admittance there. There is no meetness needful in order to our coming to Christ as he is exhibited in the gospel, other than that we be sinners of mankind. But none can be admitted to be with him in our Father's house above, who are not *made meet* for it; for nothing that defileth can enter into the King's palace. We read of that meetness which persons must have, in order to their being brought unto the King, and of its glorious Author; in the doxology of praise which the Apostle offers to God, for his bestowing the begun enjoyment of it upon himself and the believing Colossians, chap. i. 12. This meetness consists in a perfect likeness to Christ, both in soul and body, in so far as the creature is capable of it. It is begun in regeneration, justification, and initial sanctification; and carried forward in a progressive man-

ner, by the sanctifying influences of the holy Ghost: and is compleated, in respect of the soul, at death; and shall be so, in respect of the whole man, at the manifestation of the sons of God.

2. As believers their being brought unto the King at the last day, includes, that they shall be made meet for having their everlasting abode in his presence, and so their being completely delivered from all evil: It likewise includes in it, that they shall be admitted unto the full and complete possession of all that glory and blessedness which the King hath purchased, and prepared for all his true subjects; and what that glory and blessedness is, none but God himself can tell. Hence saith the Prophet, Isa. lxiv. 4. "Since the beginning of the world, men have not heard nor perceived by the ear; neither hath the eye seen, O God, besides thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him." We shall only mention a few things, unto which believers shall be brought, in the day of the consummation of their marriage with Christ. And,

(1.) In that day, they shall be brought into a most glorious place; they shall enter into the King's palace, as in the following verse. Heaven is a very glorious place, being the palace of the King of glory. It is a *house of many mansions*, John xiv. 2. It is called *paradise*, for pleasure and delight, Rev. ii. 7. It seems to be designed so, with allusion to the earthly paradise, which was a figure of it; But which, notwithstanding all its glory and beauty, yet had no glory compared with that which doth excel. Heaven is that *house not made with hands*, 2 Cor. v. 1. It was not reared up by creature-skill and wisdom; but it is the immediate workmanship of God's own hands: He alone is the builder and maker of it; and therefore, it must be

inconceivably more glorious and excellent than the most magnificent palace that ever was, or can be reared up by the hands of men.

(2.) They shall be brought unto the enjoyment of very glorious company. They shall enjoy the company of the King himself : They shall be brought unto the King, “and he that sitteth upon the throne shall dwell among them,” Rev. vii. 15. They shall join the fellowship and society of an innumerable company of holy angels, Heb. xii. 23. These glorious spirits, who now rejoice at the conversion of sinners unto God, and take pleasure in acting the part of kind tutors and guardians to the saints, Heb. i. 14. They will, with the greatest joy and pleasure, receive them into their everlasting habitations; and cordially join them in an eternal anthem of praise, to the worthy *Lamb that was slain*; although their interest in him, and relation to him, is not so near and intimate as theirs is, who are *redeemed from among men*. They shall enjoy the society of fellow saints, or mutual fellowship among themselves. The saints are in a scattered condition while they are in this world, 1 Pet. i. 1, but they shall all meet in their Father’s house above, where they shall enjoy sweet fellowship together, Luke xiii. 29. “And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God.” Although these words may have an immediate respect to the gathering of Gentile sinners unto the gospel church, from all quarters under heaven; yet they will have their accomplishment, in an eminent manner, when all the saints shall meet in the kingdom of their Father, never to part again.

(3.) They shall be brought unto the enjoyment of glorious privileges; they shall sit down at the

the table above, to partake of the marriage-supper of the Lamb, where the table shall never be drawn; they shall eat of the hidden manna, and of the fruit of the tree of life that is in the midst of the paradise of God. The Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and by the rivers of living waters shall he lead them. They shall have the fruition and enjoyment of a three-one God in Christ, as the portion of their cup; and the lot of their undefiled, and therefore incorruptible inheritance. They shall be admitted to behold the glorious body of the man Christ Jesus with their bodily eyes: Hence saith Job, chap. xix. 26. 27. "Though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself,—and not another; though my reins be consumed within me." And as a seeing the glorious body of Christ, however desirable that sight will be, could not fully satisfy, being but a created object; they shall see God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, Matth. v. 8. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." They shall see God, not indeed with the eye of the body, to which he is and ever will be invisible, 1 Tim. i. 17. but they shall see him with the eye of the understanding; being admitted to the most full, clear, distinct, and perfect knowledge of God and Divine things, that their finite capacity will admit of: Hence saith the Apostle, in the name of all true believers, 1 Cor. xiii. 12. "Now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face: Now I know in part; but then I shall know, even as I am known."

(4.) They shall be brought to glorious exercise and employment. There "the servants of God shall serve him; and they shall see his face." Heaven will not be found merely to be a place of retreat

retreat from toil and labour, but also to be a place of active service. The inhabitants of the higher house rest not day nor night; and yet they cannot weary, for their work is, and ever will prove to be their rest, and the joy of the Lord their strength. What either the employments or the enjoyments of the Church triumphant really are, the day can only declare: but we may safely conclude, that one leading branch of the employment of the redeemed will be wonder and praise; in the way of ascribing all the glory of their salvation unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the worthy Lamb, who loved them, and washed them from their sins in his own blood.

In a word, the bringing of believers unto the King at the last day, will be a giving them complete satisfaction. When they shall awake in the morning of the resurrection, they shall be satisfied with his likeness. The peace into which the children of God begin to enter, in the day of first believing, Heb. iv. 15. shall then be perfect; and their joy, which is sometimes very great, even in the present world, 1 Pet. i. 6. shall then be full. Joy enters sometimes into the believer now, and much ado it hath to find access; but when he shall be brought unto the King, he shall enter into an ocean of peace, love and joy, of which he never shall be able to reach either brim or bottom. O how inconceivably great shall the joy be wherewith the ransomed of the Lord shall be filled, when the King shall address them in these endearing terms, Matth. xxv. 34. *Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.*

III. The third thing in the method was, to illustrate the truth of the doctrine; or shew, that all who are espoused to Christ the King of glory in time,

time, shall be brought to the enjoyment of him through eternity. And the truth of the doctrine will appear, when it is considered,

1. That all who are espoused to Christ in time, were appointed to the enjoyment of eternal glory with him. Hence saith the Apostle, in the name of all who are espoused unto Christ, 1 Thes. v. 9. "God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation, by our Lord Jesus Christ." God's decree of election is a foundation that stands sure; "having this seal, the Lord knoweth them who are his," 2 Tim. ii. 19. Indeed we are carefully to remember, that the decree of election hath purely a respect to persons, and not to qualifications. God hath not appointed any to salvation, because he foresaw that they would believe and repent; but he appointed, that those whom he was pleased to make choice of to eternal glory should believe, repent, and make a diligent improvement of these means in the use of which he is pleased to bring many sons to glory. They being chosen to the end, everlasting life, were also chosen to the means leading to that great end, as the Apostle declares, 2 Thes. ii. 13. "God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth." Faith, repentance, &c. are not the causes, but the fruits of election. And the objects of redeeming love can only attain to the knowledge and comfort of their election, in consequence of their being brought forward to embrace Christ by faith, as exhibited to them in the gospel; and upon their being determined by the holy Spirit to do so, they may warrantably conclude, that they were fore-ordained to eternal life, and that they shall certainly be brought unto the full possession of it.

2. The truth of the doctrine will appear, when
it

it is considered, that all those who are espoused unto Christ in time, were not only chosen to eternal life by God the Father from everlasting; but they are also redeemed by the precious blood of his Son. Believers are a ransomed company. The King hath given his life for theirs, Matth. xx. 28. He hath loved them, and washed them from their sins in his own blood, Rev. i. 5. And thus, having got their robes washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb; they shall be before his throne for ever, and serve him day and night in his temple, Rev. vii. 14.

3. The truth of the doctrine will appear, when it is considered, that Christ hath not only redeemed his Spouse at the expence of his own precious blood; but that he hath also purchased eternal glory for her. Heaven is a purchased possession, Eph. i. 14; a possession purchased for all who marry the prime Heir: for them it is reserved; and for it *they shall be kept, by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation*, 1 Pet. i. 5. And as Jesus Christ hath purchased heaven for his Bride, he hath also taken possession of it in her name; and given her his faithful word to rely upon, as her security, that he will assuredly bring her to the possession of it in due time; as he tells his disciples, John xiv. 1, 2. “I go to prepare a place for you;” “and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will” “come again, and receive you to myself, that” “where I am, there ye may be also.”

4. It will appear, that all who are espoused unto Christ, must be brought to the eternal enjoyment of him; when we consider that he is appearing in the presence of God, intimating, that it is his will they be so. He is now *a Priest upon his throne*, Zech. vi. 13. *He died to purchase the Church unto himself; and he is alive again, and*
liveth

liveth for evermore. Of him it is witnessed, that *he liveth* : and that not only as God equal with the Father, in which character he never was nor could be subject to death ; but he lives as our Mediator, to make continual intercession for his Bride and Spouse. And his intercession in their behalf, which is founded upon the never-failing plea of his blood and righteousness, brings all those who were given him by the Father, in the council of peace, to him in the day of conversion : And it will effectually procure their admission into his everlasting kingdom and glory, at the time appointed by the Father. Then shall that sovereign demand, which he is now making in their behalf, John xvii. 24. be most perfectly answered.

Several other things might have been insisted upon, for illustrating the truth of the doctrine ; or shewing, that all who are espoused unto Christ in time, shall be admitted to the eternal enjoyment of him in heaven. Such as, their having the Spirit of God as the earnest of the heavenly inheritance ; their having him as Christ's seal ; and in virtue of which he will acknowledge them as his : The inseparable connection that there is between grace and glory, or the beginning of the good work in them, and the making of it perfect : And the promise of the Father to the Son, that he shall have a most satisfying sight of his seed ; in their regeneration, justification, and glorification : All which we take to be included in that promise which we have, Isa. liii. 11. *He shall see of the travel of his soul, and shall be satisfied.* But passing these,

IV. We shall go on to make some improvement of the subject, which was the last thing proposed in the method. And this we shall do in a few inferences. And,

- 1: Hence we may see, that true believers are
very

very honourable and dignified persons; they stand in a most near and intimate relation to the King of glory. They are espoused unto him; their league with hell, and agreement with death, is broken; and they are morally separated from the world that lieth in wickedness, or in that wicked one, viz. Satan. The honour and dignity to which they are advanced, it is true, doth not now appear; it doth not appear to the world at all, nor yet fully to themselves: but it will appear before the whole world, when Christ, who is their life, shall appear in his own glory, and in the glory of the Father, and of the holy Angels. From which consideration we find the Apostle John comforting himself, and all true believers, under the trials to which they are exposed in the present world, 1 John iii.

2. "We know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is."

2. Hence see, upon what account it is that believers are to be brought unto the King, at the consummation of their marriage with him: It is not upon the footing of their inherent holiness and righteousness, even after that is complete: No, the Bride of Christ is to be brought unto him in the raiment of needle-work; in the beautiful robe of the Bridegroom's righteousness: "She shall be brought unto the King, in raiment of needle-work." The great Apostle of the Gentiles knew no other way to be safe, in the great and notable day of the Lord, but by being found under this covering. Hence says he, "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: For whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win Christ, and be found in him; not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through

“through the faith of Christ,” Philip. iii. 8, 9. It is neither a righteousness wrought out by ourselves in obedience to the law, nor even a righteousness wrought in us by the Spirit of God, that can procure our acceptance with God now, nor our admission into his heavenly kingdom and glory at the last day; but that righteousness only which is *by the faith of Jesus Christ*: That righteousness which Christ hath wrought out by his assuming human nature, and becoming obedient even unto the death of the cross: And which is revealed unto men in the gospel, graciously reckoned to their account by JEHOVAH the Father in the day of their conversion; and which they are then brought to receive by the faith of his Spirit’s operation, for their justification, Gal. ii. 16.

3. We may see, that believers have good reason to be content with that lot which the Lord is pleased to measure out for them in the house of their pilgrimage; although it may often appear to them to be a very hard and trying one. Why, they shall in a little be brought into the immediate embraces of the King; and that will cause them to forget all the hardships ever they met with in their journey through the wilderness of this world, however great they may have been.

It is very observable, that, in the account which the Spirit of God hath been pleased to give us, of the heavenly glory, in his word; he opposes it unto the inconveniencies to which the children and people of God are exposed, while they are pressing forward unto the enjoyment of it. For instance, have any of the children of God been caused to wander up and down in this world, without a sure abode? Have any of them been made to wander in dens, mountains, deserts, and in caves of the earth; because the world reckoned them unworthy

of any place in it? Then heaven is *a city of habitation*, Psal. cvii. 5.; *a house that hath foundations*, 2 Cor. v. 1.; and therein the children of God shall have their everlasting abode; being once made pillars in the heavenly temple, they shall go no more out. Heaven is a house of many mansions, and that house from which they shall never be dislodged: Hence, saith our Lord, Rev. iii. 12. "Him that *overcometh* will I make a pillar in the temple of *my God*, and he shall go no more out." Are there many of the children of the King poor in this world? yea, are they generally *an afflicted and a poor people*? Then heaven is a *wealthy place*, Psal. lxxvi. 12.; there the children of the King *shall inherit all things*, Rev. xxi. 7.; there they shall tread that under their feet, upon which the men of this world set the highest value; for the streets of the heavenly Jerusalem *are of pure gold, like unto transparent glass*. Are the people of God sometimes vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked? 2 Peter ii. 7. and the contentious disposition of the ungodly, Psal. cxxv.? Then, being brought unto the King, they shall henceforth be troubled with none of that company; for *nothing that defileth* shall ever enter into the Jerusalem which is above. What Job saith concerning the state of the dead, may, with the greatest propriety, be affirmed concerning the city which the *King of glory* hath purchased, and prepared for his royal Bride; Job iii. 17. "There the wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary are at rest."

Are the children of God often in a dead and heartless frame of spirit, when engaged in religious duties and exercises, while here? and do they frequently experience much incumbrance from the frail body, even when the spirit is willing, Matth. xxvi. 41.? Then they shall be completely rid of all these

these inconveniencies, when they are brought unto the King: No cloud shall be upon their understandings; the face of the covering, which, in part, remains upon their minds, while in their militant state, shall then be destroyed. There shall be no backwardness in their wills, nor remaining earthliness in their affections; neither shall the body prove a hindrance to the soul, being then fashioned like unto the King's own glorious body. In a word, is the espoused Bride of Christ frequently in a sad and sorrowful condition, in this house of her pilgrimage? Do the children of the bride-chamber often hang their harps upon the willows? do they weep in secret places, because of the plagues of their own hearts, and the abounding of iniquity in the places where they dwell? and do they often find cause to lament after a hiding God? Then, in heaven, *their joy shall be full*; there shall be none there complaining of a body of death, nor that the Beloved of their souls hath withdrawn himself, and is gone: Their sun shall never go down, nor conceal himself under the cloud; nor shall their moon withdraw herself: For "the Lord shall be their everlasting light, "and their God their glory; and the days of their "mourning shall be ended."

We shall now shut up this discourse with a short word of exhortation.

First, To those who are espoused to the King of glory: And,

Secondly, To those who have hitherto refused to match with him.

1. As for you who are espoused unto the King, we exhort you to admire the kindness and love of God to you; and to praise him on account of it.— He has, in love to your souls, given his only begotten Son to the death for you; and given him to you in the gospel; and determined you by the power

power of his Spirit and grace, to accept of him as the propitiation for your sins; the Lord your righteousness, Head, and Husband. We exhort you, to praise and bless the King, that ever he was pleased to take the like of you, and you in particular, into a marriage relation with himself. Be exhorted to come daily to the King, in the prayer of faith, for all that you stand in need of, in your way to your Father's house: All that you need is in his hand; and however great and many your wants may be, *you are complete in him*. Seek meetness for being admitted into the immediate enjoyment of him, and the full and complete possession of the inheritance of the saints in light. This meetness is to be had, by a faith's improvement of the blood of Jesus: Your sanctification, as well as your justification, flows from his pierced side. It is your indispensable duty, not only to press after that *holiness* without which *no man can see the Lord*; but it is also in the way of doing so, that you can evidence, either to yourselves, or others, that the lively hope of heaven is really implanted in your hearts. Hence saith the Apostle John, first of his Epistles, chap. iii. 3. "Every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as God is pure." And, saith the same Apostle, chap. ii. 6. "He that saith he abideth in him," that is, in Christ, "ought himself also to walk, even as he walked." He ought to imitate him, in all that wherein he is imitable by his people. In a word, as your standing is in grace, we exhort you, to *rejoice in hope of the glory of God*. "And may the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work, to do his will; working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through

“through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory, for
“ever and ever, Amen.” It is from JEHOVAH,
the Father, considered as the God of peace (and
who hath, in the most ample manner, evidenced
himself to be so,) by, or for the sake of the blood,
whereby the everlasting covenant is confirmed,—
that you are to expect all that which you need; to
make you meet for being brought unto the King,
and your having your eternal abode in his presence:
And you are to expect it through Jesus Christ; it is
upon the account of what he has done and suffered
for you, in your law-room and stead.

2. As for you who have hitherto refused to
match with the King of glory,

(1.) We exhort you to consider, that your pre-
sent condition is truly melancholy and affecting,
however insensible you may be of it. You are un-
der the law as a broken covenant; and all the curses
of it are directed against you, Gal. iii. 10. You
are joined to Satan, in league with hell, and so ex-
posed unto the *wrath to come*. You are servants
of sin: It is reigning in your mortal bodies; and
you are obeying it, in its lusts, by fulfilling the de-
sires of the flesh and of the mind. You are *free*
from righteousness, as the Apostle declares was the
case with the Romans, before their conversion,
Rom. vi. 20. And to be free from righteousness,
is to be altogether destitute of it, either imputed
or inherent. So that, as long as a person is *free*
from righteousness, he is the *servant of sin*. You
are under the power of darkness. You have no
communion with God; neither can you have any,
while in your present condition. He is light, and
you are darkness in the very abstract; and, between
these, there can be no fellowship. You are not
only entire strangers to a life of communion with
God, but you are under his displeasure: He is angry
with

with the wicked every day, and his wrath abideth on them.

(2.) Be intreated to consider, what is to become of you at a dying hour. If death shall find you in your present state and condition, how dreadful shall the lot be wherein you must stand in the latter day? When the King's Daughter, and the virgins that follow her, shall be brought unto the King, into his presence-chamber; you shall be led forth as so many malefactors, in the day of their execution: and have that awful, but just sentence of condemnation, under which you are now lying, actually executed upon you. For, as certainly as the King shall say to his Bride and Spouse, in that day; *Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:* as certainly will he say to all who shall be found to have slighted the offers of his grace and love, and refused to have him to reign over them; *Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.* And although you now sit his gracious calls, and shut your ear against his charming voice in the gospel; you will find yourselves quite unable to withstand this his last, and above all creature-conception, dreadful mandate to you.

Finally, We exhort you to come to the King now, in the way of believing. *Behold the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.* Jesus of Nazareth passeth by; he is come in your nature; and hath drunk up the torrent of Divine wrath, that did run in the way of your coming into the grace and favour of God. And he is come near unto you in the gospel; ready to spread his skirt over you, enter into covenant with you, and so make you to become his. He is standing at the door of the heart of every man and woman present, demanding

manding access into it ; and enforcing his gracious call with the most engaging motives. Hence, says he, Rev. iii. 20. " Behold I stand at the door, and knock ; if any man will hear my voice," (any man or woman, none on this side hell excepted) " and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." O consider, that while he is calling you to open the door to him, he is just, upon the matter, calling you to put the work of opening your shut hearts into his own hand : for he only can knock off the bars of unbelief, impenitency, pride and prejudice, wherewith your hearts are shut against him ; and kindly determine you to give him welcome to the throne of your hearts; saying to him, *Come in, thou blessed of the Lord, why standest thou without?* And being brought to this exercise, you shall have communion with him in grace now, and in glory for ever, in the world to come.

S E R M O N XXI.

The Bride of CHRIST entering into the Palace of her Royal Husband, with gladness and rejoicing.

PSAL. xlv. 15.

*With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought :
They shall enter into the King's Palace.*

TO be in heaviness through manifold temptations, is frequently the lot of God's dear children, while they are in the house of their pilgrimage ;

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grimage; and oftentimes, their sorrows do most abound, when the joy of the ungodly is upon the wing. But there is a period approaching when the scales shall be turned; and then the world shall lament and mourn, and the godly shall leap for joy. For with gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought: *They shall enter into the King's palace.*

The foregoing verse informs us, that the espoused Bride of Christ shall be brought unto him; that is, shall be admitted to the eternal enjoyment of the three-one God in him, as to the lot of her inheritance, and the portion of her cup. And in this verse, we are informed,

1. Where it is that the Spouse of Christ is to enjoy his company. It is in *the King's palace*; that is, in heaven itself: The house of many mansions; the house not made with hands; the ivory palace, from whence the King descended in the assumption of our nature; and whither he went, when he had redeemed the Queen to himself, by his own precious blood. *They shall enter into the King's palace.* Christ hath a palace for the reception of his people. *He is not ashamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city.*

2. We are informed of the manner in which the Bride shall be brought unto the King her Husband, and enter into his palace: It shall be *with gladness and rejoicing*. Gladness and rejoicing are both words of much the same import; and when together, they set forth the fulness and perfection of that joy into which the Spouse of Christ shall enter, when she shall be brought into the Bride-chamber. Then shall the promise be accomplished which you have Isa. xxxv. 10. "The ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads: They shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow
" and

“and sighing shall flee away.” The children of the King have the seeds of joy sown in their hearts, in the day of their regeneration; and sometimes they are enabled to the actual exercise of spiritual joy and rejoicing: But then, sorrow and sighing soon take the place of gladness and rejoicing; for although the believer has always cause to rejoice, yet he is far from being always in a frame for that exercise. But when he shall enter into the King’s palace, he shall, at the same time, enter into a state of uninterrupted joy and rejoicing; according to the gracious promise of the King, John xvi. 22. “I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.”

The general doctrine contained in these words, is:

Doct. That the Bride of Christ shall enter into his palace with great joy and gladness, at the consummation of her marriage with him; or that the consummation of the spiritual marriage, betwixt Christ and believers, shall be attended with gladness and rejoicing.

The method which, through Divine assistance, we shall observe, is,

I. To enquire in what respects heaven may be called the palace of our Lord Jesus Christ the King.

II. To speak a little of the Bride of Christ, her entering into the King’s palace, in the day of the consummation of her marriage with him.

III. To speak a little concerning that joy that shall take place, when the Bride enters into the King’s palace.

IV. To endeavour to make some improvement of the whole.

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I. The *first* thing proposed was, to enquire in what respects heaven may be called the palace of our Lord Jesus Christ. And,

1. It may be so called, in regard that he is the builder and maker of it, and possesseth it as his own natural right; being, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, *over all God, and blessed for ever*, Rom. ix. 5. He made the heavens and the earth; and the sea and the dry land took their beginning from his hand. "All things were made by him; and without him" "was not any thing made that was made." Heaven is his palace in respect of purchase; hence called the *purchased possession*, Eph. i. 13. It is his palace in respect of preparation, John xiv. 2. The King hath purchased the mortgaged inheritance for his younger brethren; and is gone to prepare it for them, by carrying the virtue and efficacy of his blood within the vail: Hence he is said to have "entered in once into the holy place, by his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption for us," Heb. ix. 12. Heaven is Christ's palace in respect of actual residence, as God-man Mediator. He hath his abode in God's presence, Psal. lxi. 7.

This glorious King was pleased to descend from his royal palace, in the assumption of our nature: And having finished the work that was given him to do, he is now gone to him that sent him, there to appear in the presence of God for his people; and to make all things ready for the reception of his royal Bride and the virgins her companions, who are all to follow him in their appointed season. In one word, heaven is his palace in respect of donation, having the disposal of it put into his hand. His it is, to dispoise and make over the crown of glory to all the heirs of promise; and put them into the actual possession of the royal palace, when the mystery of God is finished, as he tells us

Matth.

Matth. xxv. 34. "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

This palace of the glorious King, into which his royal Bride shall enter in due time, hath many endearing epithets given to it in scripture.

It is called his *Father's house*, consisting of many mansions, John xiv. 2. It is called *paradise*; for beauty, pleasure and delight, 2 Cor. xii. 4. All spiritual delights will be found in the King's palace, and there shall be pleasures for ever more. It is called a *better country*; and not only a better country than this world in general, but a better country than even Canaan was, which yet was the glory of all lands, Heb. xi. 16. The earthly Canaan was a good country, *a land flowing with milk and honey*; but, compared with the heavenly country, it is but Cabal, a filthy land. It is called a *kingdom*, which is accounted the top of all earthly greatness and glory, Luke xii. 32. It is called an *inheritance, incorruptible and undefiled*; and consequently it will never fade away. It is designed the *inheritance of the saints in light, the holy city, and the new Jerusalem*. All which designations, with many more of the like import, that are given to it in Scripture, when believingly considered by the people of God, are wonderfully suited to disintangle their hearts and affections from a present world; and excite and stir them up to press after meetness for the actual possession of it, and make them long for the day, the joyful day, of their entering into it; saying with the Church, Cant. viii. 14. "Make haste my Beloved, and be thou like a roe, or a young hart, upon the mountains of spices."

II. The *second* thing in the method was, to speak a little of the Bride of Christ, her entering into

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into the King's palace, in the day of the consummation of her marriage with him. And,

1. She shall enter into the King's palace in great glory. The day of her entering into the heavenly palace will be the day of her manifestation, as the Apostle speaks Rom. viii. 19. What the people of God really are, does not now appear; but then their excellency shall be rendered conspicuous. The souls of believers are made completely holy, at their parting with the clay-tabernacle, in the finished application of the virtue and efficacy of the Redeemer's blood unto them by the Holy Spirit: And, in the day of the general resurrection, their vile bodies shall be changed, and fashioned, not merely like unto Adam's body, even before he sinned, which was doubtless very beautiful, comely and well proportioned; nor yet like unto the body of the man Christ Jesus, before his resurrection; but they shall be fashioned like unto *his glorious body*, Philip. iii. 20, 21. Hence the Apostle tells us, that the bodies of the saints *shall be raised in glory*, 1 Cor. xv. 43. And when the soul and body shall be re-united, then shall the Bride of Christ *shine as the sun, in the kingdom of her Father*. Hence saith the Prophet Daniel, chap. xii. 3. "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness," or, as some read the words, (they of the many who have done righteously) "as the stars for ever and ever." The Bride of Christ shall enter into his palace under the leading and conduct of the glorious Bridegroom himself; attended with a glorious retinue and train of holy angels, the servants of the Bridegroom.

2. She shall enter into the King's palace in a most solemn and public manner. The espousals betwixt Christ and believers, are made up in a *hid-*
secret,

secret, and mysterious manner. None but he and they know what passes between them, in the day wherein that blessed union is made up. There stands no man with our New Testament Joseph, while he makes himself known to his brethren; and much sweet fellowship and intercourse takes place betwixt them, which the world knows not of. But the marriage will be consummated in the most public and open manner. The Bridegroom will own the relation in which he stands to the Bride, in the most free and explicit manner; according to his promise, Matth. x. 32. "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father which is in heaven." He will confess that he is her Husband, and that she is his Bride and Spouse, before the whole world. The heavenly hosts shall be witness of the Bride her entry into the King's palace: And whether wicked men and devils shall see her enter the palace of the great King or not, they shall, with shame and confusion of face, see her set upon the right hand of her royal Husband; and hear her invited by him, in the most endearing terms, to take possession of the palace.

3. She shall enter the King's palace in a most triumphant manner. Before she enter the palace, she shall see all her enemies turn their backs, with shame and confusion of face. "For these shall go away into everlasting punishment, and then the righteous into life eternal." Matth. xxv. 46. Many are the enemies with whom the Bride of Christ hath to contend, while she sojourns in Meshech. Sin is her enemy, Satan is her adversary; and the world hates her, because she is not of it, but chosen out of it; and death is her last enemy. But, in the morning of her marriage-day, she shall obtain a most decisive and perfect victory over them

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them all, Psal. xlix. 14. She shall not enter into the palace of the King, until the God of peace hath bruised them under her feet.

4. The Bride, and the virgins her companions that follow her, shall enter into the royal palace of the King, with the hearty consent and welcome of all the heavenly family; the consent of the King himself, and all his friends. The King will intimate the ample welcome, which Father, Son, and Holy Ghost gives her to enter into the palace; in his gracious and loving invitation from the throne, saying, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." And she shall enter into the palace, with the hearty consent of all the servants of the family, viz. the holy angels. They are now "ministring spirits, sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation." And when they shall have accomplished their ministry to the saints here, to whom they act the part of kind tutors and guardians, in the present world; how joyfully will they receive them into their everlasting habitations, when once they have arrived at the years of their majority!

Finally, The Bride of Christ shall enter into the palace of the King, there to abide for ever. Her entering into the ivory palaces will not be that she may make a transient visit there; but to *dwell in the house of the Lord for ever, to behold his beauty, and enquire in his temple.* This is the *one thing* which the believer desires above all things else. And when he has the solid faith of his desire being accomplished, he can sing the Lord's song, even in this foreign land; saying with the Psalmist, Psal. xxiii. 6. "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." We find

find our Lord holding forth the promise to his people, of their being admitted to dwell in his house for ever ; for their consolation and support, amidst all the tribulations to which they may be exposed in their way to it, Rev. iii. 12. " Him that over-
" cometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my
" God, and he shall go no more out."

He shall go no more out : Could there be even a supposable possibility of going out, or being turned out of the King's palace, although at the remotest period ; it would prove as a worm eating at the root of all the joy and felicity of the saints : While, on the other hand, the consideration of their glory being eternal, and their crown such as shall not fade away, will add peculiar sweetness unto the marriage-supper of the Lamb, at which they shall feast for ever in the palace of the King.

III. The *third* thing in the method was, to speak a little concerning that joy which shall take place when the Bride of Christ enters into the King's palace. And, in speaking to this head,

1. We may inquire, who they are that shall be glad and rejoice when the Bride enters into the palace of the King.

2. Inquire a little into the grounds of the gladness and rejoicing that shall take place upon that occasion.

1. It was proposed to inquire, who they are that shall rejoice and be glad when the Bride of Christ enters into the King's palace ; and we are told in the metre version of the text, that *she shall be brought with gladness great, and mirth on every side.*

(1.) Then, JEHOVAH the first Person of the glorious Trinity, who stands in the relation of a Father, both to the Bridegroom and the Bride, shall be glad and rejoice. In that day wherein the spi-

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ritual marriage is consummated, "the Lord JEHO-
 "YAH shall rejoice in all his works together,"
 Psal. civ. 31. In that day, the promise shall have
 its full accomplishment to the whole Church, which
 you have Zeph. iii. 17. "The Lord thy God will
 "rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his
 "love, he will joy over thee with singing." In
 that day, he will *rejoice over them to do them good*;
 and according to his promise, most assuredly *plant*
them in the heavenly Canaan, with his whole heart
and with his whole soul, Jer. xxxii. 41. The re-
 demption and salvation of the Bride, the Lamb's
 wife, *is the pleasure of the Lord*; it is his pleasant
 work. Every part of that work affords him the
 highest pleasure and delight, Isa. liii. 10. And
 how great must his joy and satisfaction be, when he
 sees it a complete work! Indeed, we are not to
 think that God is subject to human passions; for, al-
 though these are sometimes ascribed to him in
 Scripture, they are so only after the manner of men.
 So that when we say, he will be glad and rejoice
 in the day of the consummation of the spiritual mar-
 riage betwixt his Son and the captive daughter of
 Zion; we are to be understood as speaking of the
 real satisfaction and delight which he will be plea-
 sed to take, in seeing all his counsels and purposes
 accomplished; and particularly, his gracious purpose
 and love-design of bringing *many sons to glory*, by
 his eternal Son, as the Captain of their salvation.

(2.) The glorious Bridegroom himself shall be
 glad and rejoice, in the day of the consummation of
 the spiritual marriage. We find him rejoicing from
 eternity in the prospect of that day, Prov. viii. 30,
 31. And in the days of his humiliation, he ac-
 counted it his meat and his drink, to purchase the
 Bride to himself, John iv. 34. Every part of that
 heavy, but glorious work, afforded him more real
 pleasure

pleasure and satisfaction, than meat and drink can possibly do to the most craving appetite. The day of the sinner's espousals to him, is the day of the gladness of his heart, Cant. iii. 11. And how great must his joy and satisfaction be, when the marriage is consummated; and when he shall see the whole Church of the first born enter into his royal palace! Then, and not until then, shall that promise be fully accomplished unto him, which you have Isa. liii. 11. "He shall see of the travel of his soul, and shall be satisfied."

(3.) The Holy Spirit shall be glad and rejoice, when the Bride of Christ enters into the King's palace. He is (speaking after the manner of men) grieved when sinners reject his testimony concerning the Saviour, and when the saints do not walk worthy of their high and heavenly vocation: And he must accordingly be considered as rejoicing, when his testimony concerning Christ is received; and in a special manner, when he shall see all who have received it, brought completely beyond the possibility of their ever standing in the least chargeable with any thing that can prove either dishonouring to God, or prejudicial to their own eternal peace and consolation.

(4.) The Bride herself shall rejoice and be exceeding glad in that day; she will have good cause to do so; for she shall then be in case to adopt the language of the Psalmist, Psal. xcii. 4. "Thou, Lord, hast made me glad, through thy work: I will triumph in the works of thy hands." When the children of God shall see the King in his beauty, and be made as like him as they are capable of being, 1 John iii. 2.; they shall then have no remembrance of their past sorrows, other than as of waters that fail. Their joy shall be full, for God himself shall wipe away all tears from their eyes;

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and fill their mouths with laughter; and their tongues with singing the everlasting, yet always new song, unto the glorious Author and Finisher of their faith, Rev. v. 9. saying, "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: For thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation."

(5.) The holy Angels shall be glad and rejoice. These friends of the glorious Bridegroom were full of joy, when they published the news of his actual carnation, Luke ii. 13. They rejoice in the day of his espousals with sinners, Luke xv. 10. And for the love which they bear to the Bridegroom, they stand ready to perform every office of kindness unto his Bride and Spouse: All which kind offices are included in what the Apostle affirms concerning them, when he saith, Heb. i. 14. "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation."

The holy Angels know the saints, love them, and rejoice on account of all the good that is done for them, and in them; watch over them, to keep them in all their ways, and to preserve them from the snares and dangers unto which they are frequently exposed, in the house of their pilgrimage. And it will afford them the most exquisite pleasure and satisfaction, to see them set beyond the possibility either of sinning or suffering.

2. The *second* thing on this head was, to inquire a little into the grounds of that joy and rejoicing which shall take place when the Bride of Christ shall enter into the King's palace. And,

(1.) **JEHOVAH** the Father shall rejoice in that day, because he shall then see all his gracious thoughts, counsels and purposes, concerning the redemption and salvation of fallen men, accomplished;

and

and see them all accomplished in the most perfect and exact conformity to his eternal design, and in the way of reflecting the highest honour and glory upon every attribute and perfection of his nature. If he rested, and was refreshed, when he had finished his work in the first creation, when all things were made according as he designed them from eternity, and so very good; it must be peculiarly pleasing to him, to see the workmanship of his hands in the new creation completed, which is the chief of his ways; and that work from which he hath a revenue of glory, far exceeding what could have been fetched from the first creation, although Adam, and we in him, had never sinned.

(2.) Our Lord Jesus the blessed Bridegroom, will be glad and rejoice in that day; because of the glory that shall redound to a three-one God, through eternal ages, from his undertaking and finishing the work of redemption. He undertook that onerous work from a principle of love and desire to have God glorified, his holy law magnified and made honourable, and his justice satisfied: And these great ends being accomplished, it will afford him the greatest satisfaction, to see an innumerable company of Adam's fallen family, who were the objects of God's everlasting love, unspeakably happy in the enjoyment of the fruits of his love to them. His love to them, and desire after their happiness, influenced him to descend from heaven to earth, in the assumption of human nature; to obey the law, and suffer and die in their room and stead: And his love to them, and delight in their happiness, will influence him to rejoice over them for ever. When the Bride of Christ shall be brought into the King's palace, that promise which you have Isa. lxii. 5. and which has at least ultimately a respect to that glorious event, shall have its complete accomplishment:

ment: "As the bridegroom rejoiceth over the
"the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee."

And the mutual joy and felicity of the Bridegroom and the Bride, will be matter of gladness and rejoicing to the holy Angels. The honour of the Bridegroom is the joy of these his servants; and the happiness of the Bride, whom he so much delights to honour, will yield them everlasting joy and consolation.

Finally, The Bride the Lamb's wife, will have unspeakable ground and reason to be glad and rejoice when she enters into the King's palace. And that,

[1.] When she shall consider what she hath left behind her. In that day she shall turn her back upon all that darkness and imperfection, in respect of knowledge, that she formerly laboured under. The King's palace is the *inheritance of the saints in light*, Col. i. 12. There the saints shall enjoy as full, clear, and distinct views of God, and divine things, as their finite capacities can admit of. They shall leave all the bodily infirmities and afflictions incident to the present life, behind them; they shall lay aside every incumbering weight, and take on the pleasant burden, the exceeding great and eternal weight of glory. Their hours of temptation shall then be numbered and finished; the saying being accomplished, to their unspeakable comfort, which you have Rom. xvi. 20. "The God of
"peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly." In that day, *they shall tread upon the lion and adder, and trample the young lion and dragon under their feet.* They shall complain no more of a body of sin and death, nor shall violence ever be heard in their habitation, nor wasting and destruction within their borders; for their walls shall be salvation, and their gates praise. And as the Bride of Christ

will

will find cause to rejoice when she considers what she has left behind her; so she will have still more reason to be glad when she considers,

[2.] What she hath entered into the possession of. She shall be brought to her Father, her Husband; her undefiled and never-fading inheritance; her own people; and to an everlasting feast; and a good day, where her sun shall go no more down, nor her moon withdraw herself. She shall enter into the most perfect peace; and her joy no man shall take from her. She shall eat of the hidden manna, and the fruit of the tree of life that is in the midst of the paradise of God; and drink of the river of pleasures that run at God's right hand; and so remember her sorrows no more. We come now to the

IV. Thing in the method, which was to make some improvement of the subject. And,

1. This subject may be improv'd in an use of information.

(1.) Hence see, whence it is that believers are designed the lovers of Christ's appearing, 2 Tim. iv. 8. Why, they know him, they are espoused unto him, and they love him; and because they love him, they love and long for his second appearing. They know, that when he who is their life shall appear, they shall appear with him in glory, Col. iii. 4. The day of Christ's appearing is a day appointed of God, for consummating their marriage with his Son; and no wonder although they lift up their heads, look out, and rejoice in the believing prospect of it. It is the day wherein they are to receive the massy crown of glory, which shall never fade away, and enter into the joy of their Lord; the joy which their Lord has purchased for them, at the vast expence of his becoming a man of sorrows, and his being intimately acquainted with grief.

That

That joy which their Lord is in the possession of; and upon which he had his eye when he endured the cross, and despised the shame, Heb. xii. 2. That joy of which their Lord is both the author and centre. Into this joy the saints shall enter; they shall have a full and complete possession of it; as the heir enters upon the possession of his estate in the year of his majority. The state of the blessed shall be a state of joy; not only because all tears shall then be wiped away from their eyes; but also, because all the springs of comfort shall then be opened unto them; and the fountains of joy broken up. Where there is the vision and fruition of God, a perfection of holiness, and the society of the blessed, there cannot be but a fullness of joy and pleasure for ever.

(2.) We may hence see matter and ground of comfort to all those who are espoused to Christ. Believers, it is matter of comfort to you, that however many and heavy your trials may have been already; and however many tribulations there may yet be between you and the grave; it is but a little while, and you shall enter into the King's palace with gladness and rejoicing; every thing is making way for that great event. Yet a little while, and then cometh the end, when your glorious Husband shall deliver up the kingdom unto God, even the Father; that is, he shall make a faithful account of all the true subjects of his kingdom unto the Father. The precise time of his doing so, cannot, indeed, be condescended upon; but the time of the end is immutably fixed in the purpose of God; and concerning this great event, he hath told us in general, that it shall be in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, Rev. x. 7. "In the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God shall be finished."

Now,

Now, it is a considerable time since the seventh angel began to sound: But, in the time of the blowing of the seventh trumpet, the seven vials have to be poured out; and it is certain, that some of these are already emptied: "So that the finishing period of the mystery of God is now running, and is well far on: The morning and mid-day of the mystery of God in the Church is past: The afternoon of it well far spent; and we are in this time drawing near to the evening of it." There are but a few prophecies which wait for their accomplishment; the principal of which respect the calling of God's ancient people the Jews, and the total destruction of Antichrist; and then the mystery of God shall be finished, and time ended with it. And then the eternal Sabbath shall begin; and the marriage-supper of the Lamb, that feast of fat things full of marrow, shall be served up unto the saints; and their table shall never be uncovered.

(3.) Hence we may see matter of terror to all the enemies of Christ the King, and of his royal Bride and Spouse. Christ's appearing to receive his Bride into the heavenly palace, will be no less lawfull and terrible to his enemies, than comfortable to his friends.

The day of the Bride's entering into the King's palace, will prove a heartless day to all who have been her haters and persecutors, and have not been led to repentance. Many think it a light matter to reproach, vilify, and speak all manner of evil against the saints of the Most High now, and treat them as sheep for the slaughter: But when the Lord Jesus comes to receive home his Bride to himself, he will not only enquire after the blood of his dear saints, which wicked persecutors have shed, because of their steadfast adherence to him, and

and the truth as it is in him; but he will also convince and reprove them in a most awful manner, on account of all their hard speeches which they have spoken against him, and against his hidden ones.

The day of the Bride's entering into the King's palace, will prove a heartless day to all who shall then be found to have been ashamed of him; his words, ways, truths, and ordinances, in the midst of a perverse generation. Oh! that those who are now ashamed to be reckoned godly, and can glory in it that they do not profess to be so, would enter seriously into the consideration of what our Lord Jesus is saying to all such, of whatever rank and station they be; Mark viii. 38. "Whosoever shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels." Such as are ashamed of Christ before the world, would do well to consider, that, though their confessing him now will not procure his confessing them at that day; that yet, their being ashamed of him now, and of those who are concerned, through grace, to live godly in him, upon the account, it may be, of some external consideration; is a sad sign, that they are yet among the unhappy number, upon whom he will turn his back in that day, when his face and favour will be found to be infinitely preferable to ten thousand worlds. In a word here, the day of the manifestation of the sons of God, will be a day of gloominess and darkness to all final unbelievers; all who shall be found to have rejected God's record and testimony concerning Christ. O unbeliever! how will thine heart tremble, thy hands hang down, and thy knees smite the one against the other; when the awful saying shall be accomplished,

which

which you have recorded 2 Theff. i. 7, 8, 9.
 "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven,
 "with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking
 "vengeance on all them that know not God, and
 "who obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus
 "Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting de-
 "struction from the presence of the Lord, and the
 "glory of his power." Look to the Lord for grace
 to improve the awful warning, in the way of laying
 claim to Christ now, by faith, as your peace; and
 so being acquainted with him, as the Lord your
 righteousness, good, eternal good, shall come to
 your souls.

We shall conclude this discourse in an use of ex-
 hortation :

First, To those who are espoused to our Lord
 Jesus Christ : And,

Secondly, To unbelievers.

As for you who are espoused to Christ,

1. We exhort you to bless the Lord for bring-
 ing life and immortality to light by the gospel; and
 giving you eyes to see, and hearts to understand
 the things which belong to your peace. You are
 highly favoured of the Lord; your interest in the
 King, and in all things really needful for you, is in-
 fallibly secured. The Divine goodness and mercy
 shall follow you all the days of your life : And when
 the earthly house of this tabernacle shall be dissol-
 ved, you have a building of God to come to; a house
 not made with hands, eternal in the heavens : And
 every dispensation, both of grace and providence,
 with which you are tryed, must work for your
 good, by promoting your meetness to be partakers
 of the inheritance of the saints in light.

2. We exhort you, - to give diligence, and all
 diligence, to be assured of your saving interest in
 Christ : This will tend greatly to your comfort un-

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der all the pressures you can possibly be laid under, in the house of your pilgrimage. You will be in case, not only to bear tribulation, but even to rejoice in it; when you can say, upon solid grounds, *I know whom I have believed.* That persons may really attain assurance that they are in Christ; and that they shall, in due time, enter into the King's palace, is evident; from the exhortations which we have in the Lord's word, to *give all diligence to make our calling and election sure:* The exhortations which we have, to *examine ourselves whether we be in the faith;* the marks and evidences of persons being in Christ, in which the Scripture so much abounds; and that special branch of work undertaken by the Holy Ghost, which is to bear witness with the spirits of the saints, that they are the children of God.

3. Be much employed in viewing your charter for the heavenly inheritance; I mean, the covenant of grace and promise; and rest by faith upon the faithfulness of God plighted therein. He is saying, *I will give Canaan's land for an heritage to you;* and it is the very business of faith, to rely upon the truth and veracity of God engaged in the promise, in the confident expectation of its being accomplished in due time.

4. Meditate much upon the ground of your hope, the foundation of your claim to the heavenly rest; namely, the law-magnifying, and justice-satisfying righteousness of our glorious Bridegroom and Surety: And say with the Psalmist, in the several steps of your journey towards the King's palace, "I will go in the strength of the Lord God; I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only." And while you keep your eye upon the righteousness of Christ, as the ground of your hope, seek to have real experimental acquaintance with

the good of God's chosen, some foretastes of the goodness which the Lord hath laid up for them that fear him; and these will prove comforting to your hearts, under every discouragement that you may meet with in your way to the King's palace.

Finally, Let the life which you now live in the flesh, be by the faith of the Son of God; and let a holy life and conversation evidence, that you do really live by faith; and that you are looking for a better country than this world; and a portion infinitely more excellent than any thing it can present you with. And while you thus endeavour to live by faith, let patience have her perfect work also, by endeavouring cordially to comply with the Apostle's exhortation, James v. 17. "Be patient, therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord." Shall the husbandman wait, and exercise patience for a long time, bearing many inconveniencies, in the expectation of reaping the fruits of the earth, which yet perish in the using? And shall the heirs of promise give way to impatience under their light and short afflictions; when they have their standing in grace, and the faith's prospect of reaping a harvest of eternal joy and consolation? What although they go forth mourning, bearing their precious seed; seeing they shall return rejoicing, bringing their sheaves with them?

Secondly, As for you who are unbelievers, we exhort you, to embrace Christ now, as he is holding himself forth to you in the word of grace and promise, the gospel of your salvation. After all the refusals you have given him, he is yet standing behind your walls, saying, *Behold me, behold me*; as a suitable match for you, and presently willing to betroth you unto me for ever. Behold how importunate he is to gain your consent, Rev. iii. 20. "Behold," says he, "I stand at the door and knock;

knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." While he is thus willing to espouse you to himself, and waiting that he may be gracious, be concerned to look to a God of infinite love and grace; and wrestle with him, that he may be graciously pleased to make you willing, by the power of his Spirit and grace, to give your hearts consent to be espoused unto his Son. Be exhorted to consider, how affecting your condition must be at a dying hour; and in the day when the Bride, the Lamb's wife, shall enter into the palace of her royal Husband; if the match between Christ and your souls be not made up in time. Although you be the children of the kingdom, in respect of external privilege now; yet, if you do not match with the King, you will be for ever shut out; yea, never suffered to enter into the King's palace: For no unclean thing shall enter into God's holy mountain.

When the Bride of Christ shall enter into the King's palace, you shall be thrust away into utter darkness; where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. When the Bride of Christ shall join the company and fellowship of God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and of an innumerable company of holy angels; you must take up your eternal abode with the workers of iniquity, in the blackness of darkness; having devils and wicked men for your everlasting companions, in misery and woe: And, not only must you be destitute of all that is in the smallest degree comfortable, but you must for ever lie under the most sensible, scorching, and agonizing effects of God's righteous displeasure.—*For upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: This shall be the portion of their cup.* O unbeliever! art thou not yet

yet disposed to say : If these things are to be the portion of their cup who finally reject Christ, then, "O my soul, come not thou into their secret, into their assembly, mine honour, be thou not united." Are there any of you saying, I would fain close the match with Christ yet, after all the nay-says I have given him ; but I am so vile and unworthy of the high dignity of being espoused to the *Prince of the Kings of the earth* ; and have so long refused to submit to his righteousness, that I am afraid he will not now accept of me. As to this, you are to remember, that there was never one, among the many upon whom this dignity has been already conferred, who was, in the very least degree, worthy of it ; nor will such a person ever be found in the ages yet to come. Therefore, let not the consideration of your own unworthiness stand in the way of your receiving the Christ of God. It is enough to you, however unworthy and hell-deserving you be, that God freely gives his Son to you, and that the Son is willing to espouse you to himself.

When David sent his servants to commune with Abigail, to take her to him to wife, 1 Sam. xxv. 29. she readily owned how unworthy she reckoned herself of the honour and dignity intended her ; but, at the same time, she made no delay to go with the servants of David. Go thou, O Sinner, and do likewise : Never expect, by thine own doings, and legal dress, to render thyself worthy to be espoused by the *Prince of life*, God's *unspeakable Gift* ; but embrace him as thou art, by faith, and he will make thee what he would have thee to be. He will take away thy *filthy garments*, and clothe thee with *change of raiment*. He will set the fair mitre of his righteousness upon thine head, and make thee comely, through his comeliness put upon thee ;

502 *The Bride of Christ entering into his Palace, &c.*
thee; and thus, being made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light, thou shalt be admitted into the eternal enjoyment of it: "For with gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought; they shall enter into the palace of the King."

S E R M O N XXII.

The Spiritual Seed of CHRIST, an enduring and princely Race.

Psal. xlv. 16.

Instead of thy Fathers shall be thy Children, whom thou mayest make Princes in all the Earth.

WHEN speaking from the two preceding verses, we observed, that they might be safely viewed as expressive of that dignity and happiness unto which persons are brought, even in the present life, upon their union to Christ; as also, of the spiritual joy which takes place on all hands, when sinners are brought to embrace the Saviour by faith; and likewise, of the continued gathering of the people to the blessed Shiloh, which shall take place until the last elect vessel be brought in: Proposing, at the same time, to consider these verses as referring to the consummation of the spiritual marriage betwixt Christ and his Church, and the introduction of the Bride into the heavenly palace, which the Bridegroom hath purchased and prepared for her reception; unto which glorious events, they seem evidently to look, at least in their ultimate scope and design.

Having

Having then discoursed from the above verses, as ultimately referring to the day of complete redemption: It may be further observed here, that the words now read are not to be viewed as declaring what will be consequential of the glorification of the whole Church; but as declarative of what certainly follows upon, and is inseparably connected with the espousals betwixt Christ and the Church in her militant state; and particularly, as expressive of the plentiful fruits of Christ's marriage with the Gentile Church. These things observed; in the words presently under consideration, we may notice,

1. The Person speaking, and the persons to whom he speaks. The Person speaking is JEHOVAH the Father, or the Psalmist in his name. He had been speaking to, and concerning the Church, from ver. 10. to ver. 16. and here he addresses himself to the glorious Bridegroom.

That JEHOVAH the Father is here speaking to our Lord Jesus Christ, and not directly to the Church, is evident; when we consider, that the relatives affixed to the words *fathers* and *children*, in the Hebrew text, are in the masculine gender: As also, that what is contained in the following verse, must necessarily be understood as spoken to and concerning him. Yet the words of our text are to be viewed as also pointing forth the Bride's interest and concern in the fruits of the spiritual marriage; for the children are spoken of, as common both to the Bridegroom and the Bride. For as all true believers have Jesus Christ for their Father; so *Jerusalem, which is above, is the mother of them all*, Gal. iv. 26, : And saith the Psalmist, Psal. cxiii. 9. "He maketh the barren woman to keep house, and to be a joyful mother of many children."

2. We may observe, what the Father is here saying

saying to the Son. "Instead of thy fathers (says he) shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth." The general design of these words is to shew, that our glorious IMMANUEL shall never want a seed to do him service, while sun and moon endure. When the fathers fall off, the children shall rise up in their stead, and praise him. By these *fathers*, we may understand the Church under the Old Testament in general: For those who lived under the Old Testament dispensation may be called *fathers* in respect of precedency, as they enjoyed the morning and mid-day of the dispensation of grace, before it was sent to the Gentiles; they had the first vessel launched for IMMANUEL'S land, so to speak.

Although by those called Christ's *fathers*, we may also understand the kings whom God raised up to rule over his ancient people; especially those of them who were the fathers of the Messiah according to the flesh. For our Lord Jesus Christ is, according to his human nature, the offspring of ancient kings; although, in respect of his Divine Person, he is the *Son of the Highest, the only begotten of the Father*.

3. We have something supposed concerning the *fathers*; namely, that they have served their generation, and are accordingly removed from the stage; for death will not suffer men to continue here. It is moreover here supposed, that the bulk and body of the Jewish nation were to be broken off, because of their unbelief. Christ came to his own, but they received him not. They were invited to the marriage-dinner, but they would not come, Matth. xxii. 45. And God was graciously pleased to take occasion, from their unbelief and rebellion, to send the word of salvation to the Gentiles; as the

the Apostle shews at large, in the eleventh chapter of his Epistle to the Romans.

4. We have the promise of a numerous progeny to come up in their stead. "Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children." That is, Christ shall gather a Church to himself from among the Gentiles. He will take the Gentiles, though olives wild by nature, and graft them in among the believing Jews, the natural branches; and cause them to partake with them of the root and fatness of the olive-tree, Rom. xi. 17. And the Church under the New Testament shall be more eminent, numerous and extensive, than it ever was under the Old. The promise in the text intimates, that the entail of Christ's seed shall never be cut off; and is, in effect, the same with that we have Isa. liii. 11. "He shall see of the travel of his soul, and shall be satisfied."

5. We may observe the certainty of the promise, as to the accomplishment of it. "Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children." There is no peradventure in the case; *a seed must serve Christ*, Psal. xxii. 30. And again saith JEHOVAH the Father, Psal. lxxxix. 4. "Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations."

Finally, We may observe how the children come into the family, and also the great dignity to which they are advanced in being brought thither. The great Father of the family takes them, and *makes them princes in all the earth*. He takes them out of the kingdom of Satan, and makes them *kings and priests unto God*. He raiseth them from the dung-hill, and sets them among the princes of his people. Among the chief of these children whom Christ was to make princes in all the earth, were the Apostles, and other extraordinary Ministers of

the New Testament. These were indeed princely children in the gospel Church; and the special instruments of subduing the nations under Christ, by the spiritual weapons of the gospel, 2 Cor. xii. 4.

But not only were the Apostles, and other extraordinary office-bearers, noble princes in the kingdom of Christ: For although they were, in an eminent manner, the worthies of our New Testament David; yet even ordinary office-bearers in the Church are so, when they act a faithful part for Christ: And all true believers are princes also, by virtue of their new birth. And such princes Christ hath made, and will still continue to make, in all the earth. There shall be some of every kindred, tongue, people and nation, to join in the new song; saying to the Lamb, *Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us unto God by thy blood.*

The doctrine which we observe from these words, thus a little explained, is:

Doct. That as our Lord Jesus, in virtue of his marriage with the Church, hath, from the beginning, and to latest posterity will have, a seed serving him; so that seed is a noble and princely race.

In speaking further from this subject, the method we shall observe, through Divine assistance, is,

I. To make a few general remarks relative to the subject.

II. To inquire, why believers are called the children of Christ?

III. To shew that the children of Christ are a noble and princely race.

IV. To apply.

I. The *first* thing was, to make a few general remarks relative to the subject. And,

I. We

1. We may remark, that the Church of Christ, both under the Old and New Testament, is but one family, substantially considered: He had not one Church under the Old, and another under the New Testament. Although the same persons do not make up the family of God under both these dispensations, yet the Church is but one; the fathers under the Old Testament dispensation, and the children under the New. The Gentile Church was grafted into the old stock, Rom. xi. 18, 19.; and she enjoys the same privileges with the fathers under the Old Testament, substantially considered; and is obligated to the performance of the same duties, typical things being laid aside.

2. We may remark, that the children of Christ, and the Church, are not always literally the descendants of those of whom the Church has been once composed. "But the children of the promise are accounted for the seed." When the Jews cast themselves out of the Church by their unbelief, the Gentiles were called unto it; and being made the children of God, by faith in Christ Jesus, they were reckoned for the seed. It is not in respect of a carnal relation to the godly who have gone before us, that we can be denominated their children in a religious sense; but only by a spiritual kindred. Those only, whether Jews or Gentiles, that follow the footsteps of Abraham's faith, have him to their father: Hence saith the Evangelist John i. 12, 13. "But as many as received him, (*viz.* Christ) to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name; which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

There are some men who, although they be very impious themselves, will nevertheless boast

of their relation to their godly ancestors; as we find the unbelieving Jews did, saying, *"We have Abraham to our father."* But although it is no doubt a great privilege to have religious parents, in regard of the good instruction they give to their children, and the good example which they set before them; as also the many petitions which they present at the throne of grace in their behalf; and also as their relation to them may sometimes bring along temporal blessings with it: Yet, if the children of the godly do not follow the faith and practice of their predecessors, their natural relation to them will be so far from availing them any thing, in a spiritual and saving sense, that it will really turn out to their greater confusion, in the day of final count and reckoning.

3. We remark, that although the family of Christ in this world may be more or less numerous, as God hath been pleased to settle the matter in his eternal counsel and design, yet it shall never become extinct; but the entail of IMMANUEL's seed shall be continued in all generations: Instead of the fathers, there shall be the children. Neither persecution, temptation, or the revolt of particular churches, can cut off the succession of Christ's seed. When his ancient people refused to serve him; upon his lifting up his hand to the Gentiles, they readily came over to his standard, and *flowed together to the goodness of the Lord.* And no sooner has the door been shut against Christ in one place of the Gentile world, than it has been opened in another. He must "see his seed, he must increase;" and the pleasure of the Lord must prosper in his hand," in the application of redemption, as effectually as it hath done in the purchase of it.

4. We remark, that whatever persons be before they

they are brought into the family of Christ; once
that they are really brought into it, they are truly
great, excellent, and honourable. All the children
of Christ are noble princes; they are partakers of
a Divine nature, 2 Pet. i. 4. Their Father hath
loved them, and washed them from their sins in
his own blood, and made them Kings and Priests
unto God. They are all exalted in his righteous-
ness, and crowned with his loving-kindness, which
is better than life. And although it be the lot of
the greater part of them to be small and despised
in this world, because their excellency is hid from
the men of it, 1 John iii. 2. yet it is their unspeak-
able privilege to be the men whom the King de-
lighteth to honour. He loves them, and because
he loves them, they are therefore honourable.
Hence saith he, Isa. xliii. 4. "Since thou wast
precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable,
and I have loved thee." The spiritual seed of
Christ are ignoble by nature, being the children
of Satan as well as others; but they are dignified
by grace. They reign over their unruly lusts and
corruptions, even in the present life; so that these
can never obtain the dominion over them, Rom. vi.
14. And they shall for ever reign in life, and over
death, by one JESUS CHRIST.

Finally, We remark, that the gospel hath been,
or shall be preached in all the earth. If the chil-
dren of Christ are to be princes, and that in all
the earth, then his gospel must be proclaimed
through all the earth; for it is by means of the
gospel that his children are begotten. Hence saith
the Apostle James, chap. i. 18. "Of his own will
begat he us, with the word of truth, that we
should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures."

The blowing of the gospel-trumpet is the great
mean which God is pleased to make use of, for ga-
thering

thering the children of Christ out of every *kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.* It would appear from Rom. x. 18. and Col. i. 6. that the gospel was preached, even in the days of the Apostles, in all the then known world; or, at least, that it was heard of all the world over: And we have reason to think, that those places of the Gentile world, which do not now see IMMANUEL's glory, nor hear his fame, shall be favoured with the gospel; when the bulk and body of God's ancient people shall be again grafted into their own olive-tree, Rom. xi. 24.; and that the gospel shall be preached with more general success than it has yet been in any age since the days of the Apostles.

II. The *second* thing in the method was to inquire, Why believers are called the children of Christ? And,

1. They may be called *his children*, in regard that, as believers, they have their spiritual being and spiritual life from him. He hath procured life for them at the expence of his own life, as he tells us, Matth. xx. 28. "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." And as he hath procured life for his children, by the merit of his obedience and death; so he breathes spiritual life into their souls, by his word and Spirit, in the day of their regeneration and effectual vocation. Hence he designs himself, the *resurrection and the life*, John xi. 25. Believers have their life from Christ; it is hid with him, and maintained and preserved by him; and, through grace, they improve it to his glory.

2. Believers may be called the *children of Christ*, because of their likeness to him; they were all *predestinated*, that they might be *conformed to his image*, Rom. viii. 29. And their conformity unto him is begun in their regeneration; they are made
partakers

partakers of the same spirit with him; for *he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit*. Believers are made partakers of a Divine nature, in virtue of the great and precious promises which are given unto them, 1 Pet. ii. 4. They are partakers of Divine qualities and endowments; their old things are passed away, and all things with them are in part become new, 2 Cor. v. 17. The image of God is instamped upon them in their regeneration; and while they behold the glory of the Lord with the eye of faith, in the glass of the promise, their path and progress in holiness is *like the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day*, Prov. iv. 18. It is in respect of these divine and heavenly endowments, that the Spouse is called *the daughter of the Prince*, Cant. vii. 1. Believers have the free and noble spirit of sons; while the rest of mankind have only the base, mean, and servile spirit of the world. All true believers bear some likeness to Christ, in faith, love, and humility, and in zeal and concern for the advancement of the honour and glory of God.

3. Believers may be called *the children of Christ*, in regard of the tender care and sympathy which he exercises toward them: "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him," Psal. ciii. 4. The most affectionate and tender-hearted mother cannot exercise such a tender care of, and compassion upon her sucking child, as the Lord Jesus doth toward the travel of his soul. A woman "may forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion upon the son of her womb," Isa. xlv. 19. But the Lord not only will not, but he cannot forget his children; yea, such is his care about them, and sympathy for them, that *whosoever toucheth them toucheth the apple of his eye*; Zech. ii. 8. He feels them

them before the light of his countenance continually; his eye is ever upon them for good, and his everlasting arms are never taken from underneath them. With the most unremitting care and diligence does our Lord Jesus perform all that for his children which was promised concerning him, Isa. xl. 11. "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd; he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young."

4. Believers may be called Christ's children, because he provides for them as a father doth for his children. Believers do not only derive their spiritual life and being from Christ, but their life is also maintained and preserved by him. Our Lord Jesus feeds his people with the "finest of the wheat," and satisfies them with "honey from the rock," Psal. lxxxvi. 16. Believers eat the flesh, and drink the blood of their heavenly Father by faith; and these are meat indeed, and drink indeed, John vi. 58. He arrays them in the best and most durable clothing; namely, the robe of his own perfect and law-magnifying righteousness. Yea, so ample is the provision which Christ has made for his children, that all things are contained in it. Hence saith he, Rev. xxi. 4. "He that overcometh shall inherit all things." He gives his children all things which they really stand in need of in this world; and who can once conceive what he hath laid up for them in the world to come? Hence saith the Psalmist, Psal. xxxi. 19. "O how great is thy goodness which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men."

5. Believers may be called the children of Christ, because it is from him, and in virtue of their rela-

tion

tion to him, that they receive their portion and inheritance, both in grace here and in glory hereafter. All the spiritual goodness which they enjoy was procured by him; and they receive it all from his hand. For in him it hath pleased the Father that all fulness should dwell, Col. i. 19. And so it is out of his fulness that they all receive, and grace for grace. Eternal life, which is God's free gift to them, is through Jesus Christ their Lord, as the meritorious cause of it, Rom. vi. 23. And it is from him that they are to receive the kingdom, the throne, and the crown of glory, which shall never fade away; to all which they are born heirs, in the day of their effectual calling and regeneration.

Several other things might have been insisted on here, in respect of which believers may be designed the children of Christ: Such as, that he instructs them as a Father doth his children; admits them to special nearness to himself; corrects them as a Father doth his children; and protects and defends them against all the insults of their enemies, &c. But upon these things we shall not stay.

III. The *third* thing in the method was, to shew that the children of Christ are a noble and princely race: But as all, or at least most of the particulars which would natively offer themselves here, have been mentioned, and a little enlarged upon, when speaking from verse 9th; we shall only observe at this time, that all true believers have a noble and princely spirit and disposition, 2 Tim. i. 7. They are all favoured with a princely education, being taught of God, John vi. 45. They all wear a princely clothing, Isa. lxi. 10. They all live upon noble and princely provision, John vi. 58. They have a princely dominion: They are not *slaves to Satan, and divers lusts and pleasures*, as the men of the world are; for the Son hath made them free, John

viii. 32. They have a princely refinee and train, Heb. i. 14. And they have a princely, undefiled, incorruptible, and never-fading inheritance, in sure reserve for them. Their heavenly Father hath purchased it for them; taken possession of it in their name; and will most assuredly receive them to the complete possession of it, when once the year of their majority is fully come.

IV. The *fourth* thing proposed in the method, was, to make some improvement of the subject. And this text and doctrine may be improv'd,

1. In an use of information; and

(1.) Hence we may see, that the church is a permanent and abiding society; although the fathers may be called off, the children must rise up in their stead. "Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayst make princes in all the earth." The Church of Christ is built upon a rock, and he himself is that rock; and therefore, the gates of hell shall never be able to prevail against her, Matth. xvi. 18. Whatever storms may blow against the Church, either from hell or earth; she is furnished with such an answer to all the messengers of the nations, as may assure them that Jerusalem will prove "a burdensome stone to all who burden themselves with it, though all the people of the earth were gathered together against it." And it is, "that the Lord hath founded Zion, and the poor of his people shall trust in it;" or, *they shall trust in him*. The poor of his people shall trust in him, viz. in him who hath founded Zion. They shall trust in him, both for the preservation of Zion in general, and their own safety in particular.

(2.) We may hence see, that all true believers are unspeakably deep in debt to the Lord Jesus. They were once *dead in trespasses and sins*; children

dren of wrath, and heirs of hell, as well as others. They were lying under the curse of the broken law, and exposed unto the wrath to come: And the Lord Jesus hath not only redeemed them from the curse of the law, by fulfilling all righteousness in their law-room and stead; but he has also received them into the most near and endearing relation to himself. He has not only taken them out of the family and slavery of Satan; but made them his own children, and so "heirs of God, and joint heirs with himself."

(3.) We may see whence it is, that the *righteous* is said to be *more excellent than his neighbour*, Prov. xii. 26.; why the *righteous*, or the true believer, is *born from above*: He is a *son of God*, by regeneration and adoption; he is of an excellent spirit; he is delivered from the spirit of the world, and endowed with the spirit of faith, love, and of a sound mind. He minds excellent things. His *affections are set upon the things which are above*, and his *conversation is in heaven*. He is born an heir to an excellent inheritance; an *inheritance that excels in beauty*. And however low and contemptible he may appear in the eyes of the men who have their part and portion only in this present life, yet he is highly exalted in the righteousness of his heavenly Father, and shall reign in life by him.

(4.) Hence see the true cause and reason of the world's enmity against believers; why, it is because they are the children of Christ. True believers, and those men who have their portion only in this world, belong to very distinct families. While men are in their natural state, they have the devil for their father, John viii. 44. And their father and they are full of enmity against Christ and his seed. Believers are *chosen out of the world*; and therefore the *world hates them*, John xv. 19. And when they are

are enabled, through grace, to have a conversation becoming the gospel; their life and practice do, upon the matter, condemn the wicked and ungodly: As it is said concerning Noah, in the case of his providing the ark, in the prospect of the deluge, Heb. xi. 7. And this tends still to draw forth the world's indignation against them the more, as saith the Apostle, 1 Pet. iv. 4. "They think it strange that you run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you."

(5.) Hence see, that the people of God need not, and should not be anxious about the riches, honours, and pleasures of this world. Why should they seek great things for themselves in this world, the fashion of which is soon to pass away? It may well suffice them, that they are the children of God; and so "rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath prepared for them that love him." The riches which belong to the children of Christ are not here, but laid up in heaven for them: And when they believingly consider, that God *spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for them*, Rom. viii. 32. they may be assured, that although he may not always give them that which they apprehend is best for them, that yet he will not fail to give them that which is really most for their advantage. *The young lions may be hungry, and they may lack their food; but God will not starve his children.* What will he, nay, what can he keep back from those, for whom and to whom he hath given his own Son?

2. The second use of the doctrine may be for trial and examination.

My friends, you are all the children of Christ by profession, and in respect of external privilege; but are you among his seed in reality? Are you *born again; born of water and of the Spirit*? Are you converted

converted and become as little children? If you are not so, you may see what your pedigree is, John viii. 44. *You are of your father the devil.* But here some may be ready to ask, How shall we know if we are really born again? For your help in this important matter, consider,

(1.) That the little child, or the new-born babe, lifts up his eyes upon objects which he never beheld before: And so it is with the man who is regenerate, and born again. He has got a humbling view of himself in the glass of God's holy law, brought home upon his conscience by the Spirit of Christ: He hath seen that he was a dead man in the eye of the law, upon account of his sins, original and actual: Altho' he was once alive; that is, altho' he thought himself to be in a very good condition, and so standing fair for eternal life, upon the footing of his own righteousness; he has been brought to perceive his fatal mistake: And that the reason of it was, his being *without the law*; that is, without the true knowledge of the law, in its spirituality, perfection, and Divine extent; as reaching, not only to the sinful thoughts, desires, and vain imaginations of the heart, but even to the corrupt principle from whence they do issue; as the Apostle Paul declares was the case with him, when the Lord came to deal savingly with his soul, Rom. vii. 9. Have you, then, got such a view of the Divine law, and of your own hearts, in the glass of it; as hath blasted and killed all your hopes of ever attaining acceptance with God, and eternal life, by your personal obedience thereto?

But further, as the regenerate man has got a true, just, and humbling view of himself, in the glass of God's most holy law; he hath been likewise brought to see Jesus Christ, his Spiritual Father, by the eye of faith, in the glass of the promise,

mise, for his consolation. His eyes have been opened to behold the King in his beauty, Isa. xlii. 17. The law lets a man see that he is dead, and there it leaves him; and he sees that he must perish, if no other door is opened for his relief. But in this affecting case, the Holy Spirit graciously takes occasion to glorify Christ; by shewing him unto the man, in the glory of his person, suitableness of his offices, fulness of grace, ability and willingness to save him, and as clothed with authority by the Father to do so: While, at the same time, he brings the man, by the irresistible power and efficacy of his grace, to embrace and rest by faith upon Christ, as his Saviour from sin and wrath; thus accomplishing the promise to him in particular, "Surely, shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength."

(2.) The new-born babe opens his mouth to receive food, with which he was formerly altogether unacquainted: And this is really the case with the man who is born again, and so really brought into the family of Christ. Whereas, he was before feeding on ashes, and in vain seeking to fill his belly with the husks which the swine do eat: He now opens his mouth to receive that food which is solid and substantial; he eats that which is good; and his soul begins to delight itself in the marrow and fatness of the new covenant. Having found the word of God, he eats it; and it is the joy and strength of his heart; he *eats the flesh of the Son of man, and drinks his blood* by faith. All the ordinances of God are sweet and amiable to him; because therein he sees his power and glory; and finds the food of his soul. And many a sweet and soul-refreshing meal he receives; while he believingly contemplates the undertaking, incarnation, obedience, death, resurrection, ascension, and intercession of the Lord Je-

lus;

fus; and while he looks out for, and loves his second appearing.

(3.) Children generally come into the world crying: And so do the children of Christ enter into the world of grace. They come into it with the tear of godly sorrow and repentance in their eye: Having got a faith's view of God's mercy in Christ, they are filled with holy shame and blushing, upon the account of all that they have done against him, Ezek. xvi. 63. They perceive their spiritual wants; and, under the influences of the Spirit of adoption, they cry to their heavenly Father to have them supplied.

But not to insist upon this use of the doctrine: If you are the children of Christ, your obedience to the Divine law will be free; and influenced from gospel motives, as it springs from evangelical principles. And you highly prize the privilege of being the children of Christ, in so far as you come to be really sensible of it. You admire the love and grace of God, which are so richly manifested in taking you into his family. You are disposed to join with the Apostle in saying, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called;" that is, that we should really be "the sons of God," 1 John iii. 1. When you consider who is the Lover, in what a costly channel his love vents itself, and when you can view yourselves as the objects upon whom it terminates; you certainly cannot fail to wonder and praise, and praise and wonder.

3. The *last* use of the doctrine shall be in a word of exhortation,

First, To the spiritual seed of Christ: And,

Secondly, To those who are yet in the family of Satan.

As for you who are the children of Christ,

(1.) We

(1.) We exhort you to bless the Lord for taking you out of the family of Satan, and putting you among the number of his dear children. And, in order that you may be excited and stirred up to bless God for this privilege, be exhorted to meditate much upon the love and grace of God bestowed upon you. Think much upon what it has cost Christ, to bring you into this relation to himself: He became a *servant*, that you might become the *sons of God*. Think much upon the distinguishing nature of this privilege. Christ hath made you his children, his free-men; while many, no worse than you are by nature, are still the slaves of Satan.— Think upon the free and gratuitous nature of the high privilege you enjoy: It is not for *works of righteousness which you have done*, that you have your standing among the children of God: No, it is according to God's *abundant mercy*, that you are *begotten again to a lively hope*. Think upon the permanent nature of your high privilege of sonship: Those who are once the children of God, are always so, John viii. 35. "The servant abideth not in the house for ever; but the son abideth ever." Nothing can ever separate you from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus.

(2.) We exhort you to improve your high privilege, in the way of coming daily to God, as your God and Father in Christ; for all that you stand in need of. Your spiritual wants are constantly recurring upon you; but in your heavenly Father you are complete. And it is in the exercise of faith and prayer, that you are to expect the supply of all your wants.

Be exhorted to improve your nearness to the Lord, in behalf of Zion: Plead with him for a revival to his work in all the churches of the Reformation; and particularly, in the land of our nativity.

Plead

Plead for a revival to a covenanted work of reformation; And let the consideration of the low state of the Lord's work at this day, the carelessness of the greater part of the generation about it, and the general opposition that is made thereto, be improved by you, as means to excite and stir you up to be the more importunate with the Lord, *to establish Jerusalem, and make her a praise in the earth.* This was the improvement which we find the Psalmist made of the opposition, which he saw managed against the Lord's work in his day: Hence says he, Psal. cxix. 126. "It is time for thee, LORD, to work: For *men have made void thy law.*"

Finally, Let the spiritual seed of Christ be exhorted to love, reverence, and honour their heavenly Father; and to evidence their love to him, by endeavouring to yield a free and chearful obedience to all his commandments. Let them give all diligence to walk worthy of such a Father, by endeavouring in all things to please him. This is the Apostle's exhortation to all the spiritual seed, Col. i. 10. Now to walk worthy of the Lord unto all well-pleasing, is so to walk, as to study to please him in all things; and to be constantly upon your guard against every thought, word and deed, which may prove offensive unto him. It is, through grace, to aim at a life and conversation which gives no just cause, either to ourselves or others, to conclude that we are not among the spiritual seed of Christ; however many infirmities and imperfections are yet to be found with us.

Secondly, As for you who are yet in the family of Satan, which is the case with all unregenerate persons;

(1.) We exhort you to consider, what a family it is to which you belong, and who is your father: All such as are not brought in among the children

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of Christ, by regeneration and adoption, are the children of the wicked one, and are doing his lusts, John viii. 44. And as he is, so are they. Satan was a murderer from the beginning, and so are all his children. All you, who are yet in a state of estrangement from Christ, you are murderers, and have been so from the beginning. Your sin in the first Adam, was a thrust at the life and being of God, and you are really self-destroyers : And you have not only given yourselves a deadly wound, by the breach of the Divine law ; but you stand chargeable with rejecting the remedy which God hath provided for you also. Your unbelief is a crucifying his Son a fresh, and a making light of all the tenders of the Divine kindness to you through him. Oh ! be entreated to consider, that whatever profit or pleasure Satan may promise you in his service ; if you live and die in it, *death*, eternal *death*, will be your *wages*, Rom. vi. 23. “ Upon the wicked” God “ shall rain “ snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest : This shall be the portion of their cup.”

(2.) Consider, that you may yet be delivered out of the family of Satan. The prison-doors are cast wide open by the glorious Captain of our salvation. He hath broken the gates of brass, and torn in sunder the bars of iron. A gracious God is kindly inviting you, to leave the family of Satan ; and assuring you of a gracious and hearty reception into his own family and favour : Hence says he, 2 Cor. vi. 17, 18. “ Come out from among them, and be ye “ separate, and touch not the unclean thing ; and “ I will receive you ; and I will be a Father unto “ you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith “ the Lord Almighty.” And not only is the Lord inviting you into his family ; but he is also promising, that such as you are shall come and partake of the privileges of his children : He is promising, that

that poor orphans shall call him their Father, Jer. iii. 19. "I said, How shall I put thee among the children, and give thee a pleasant land, a goodly heritage of the hosts of nations?" This is a question unanswerable by any but by him who proposes it. Behold then, believe and wonder at the manner in which he answers it : "And I said, Thou shalt call me, My Father, and shalt not turn away from me." Take his gracious promise to the throne of his grace then, and plead the accomplishment of it, each of you for himself, and herself, in particular ; saying to him, "Do as thou hast said." For although it is not upon the account of your pleading the promise, that you are to expect the accomplishment of it ; yet it is the Lord's ordinary way to bestow his blessing upon persons, when they are in the use of means : For although he cannot have pleasure in the services of those who are not accepted in his beloved Son, yet he hath a respect to the ordinances of his own appointment ; and is graciously pleased to confer his goodness upon men, when they are attending upon him in them.

(3.) Consider, that the only season in which you can become the children of God, is hastening to a period. The day of grace is a limited day to all in general, and to every one of you in particular. Death will, in a little, put an end to all opportunity of access for you into the family of God : *For as the tree falleth*, when death fetches the awful stroke, so it will for ever *lie* ; and as death leaves you, the last judgment will find you, Heb. ix. 27. "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." There is nothing that takes place with a person betwixt death and judgment, that can make the least alteration as to the state of the soul ; nay, even the judgment of the great day

day will produce no change respecting the state, either of good or bad. He that dies in an unjustified state, shall be *unjust still*; and he that dieth *filthy* shall be *filthy still*. As you therefore know not the time when, the place where, nor the circumstances in which death may find you; tremble at the thought of having your last step a leap in the dark. Embrace Christ now by faith. *Kiss the Son, lest he be angry*. Submit to his righteousness, and so give up yourselves to him; suffer the word of exhortation, which you have Rom. xii. 1. and seek that the Lord may bring you really to comply with it. "We beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies (your whole persons,) a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

Thirdly, Our last exhortation, from this subject, is to you who are young people. Is God the Father promising to Christ the Mediator, that he shall always have a seed serving him, in one place of the world or other; and that when he calls off the fathers, he will raise up the children in their stead? Then we exhort you to avail yourselves of the promise, and exercise a holy ambition to be of the number of these children. "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." Since we came among you in this congregation, there are many of the fathers who saw the propriety and necessity of taking up a witnessing profession, called off by death; and you who have risen up in their stead, have come more easily by your profession and privileges than they did. And although some of you are looking like as if the Lord were accomplishing the promise among us, "Instead of the fathers shall be thy children," &c. and we make no doubt but the Lord will preserve a remnant among you to do him

him service ; yet we have great reason to lament, that many of you are so little concerned to acquaint yourselves with the Testimony of the day, and the principles in the profession of which you have been brought up. We have reason to lament that pride, and an itch after conformity to a vain generation, prevails so much among you ; and that some of you are, from time to time, falling off from your witnessing profession ; being impatient of the restraints which it lays you under, from conforming to the vain sinful customs and practices of the day wherein we live ; such as promiscuous dancings, penny-weddings, &c. which are much in fashion, particularly in this corner : And which, according to the way in which they are generally conducted, are evidently among the special engines of Satan, not only for diverting your minds from taking up with seriousness, but likewise of corrupting your morals. The visible difference between many who are now owning a witnessing profession, and those who were first honoured to come under the banner of a Testimony for it, hath sometimes put us in mind of what is said of Israel, in the next generation after they came into the promised land, Judges ii. 10. “ And all that generation (*viz.* that was first settled in the land of Canaan) were gathered unto their fathers : And there arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel.” Would to God that these words were not so applicable to us, in this generation, as they are. The present generation seems, in a great measure, to have forgotten what the Lord hath done for his Church in these lands ; and that not only in ancient times, but even in our own day.

What I would then say to you of the young generation, with respect to the duty of the day wherein

wherein we live, I shall lay before you in the words of the judicious and godly Mr *Boston*; in his sermon entitled, "The Advantages of Cleaving to the Lord in a Declining Time." Says he, "When we look to the rising generation at this day, they are visibly declining, generally corrupt in their manners, and worse than their fathers: However, in a few years, church and state and country will be in their hands. This is a weighty consideration for all who are concerned for religion. I would therefore (says he) drop a few words to those of the younger sort of both sexes.

"1. While you are entering on the stage of the world at this time, you must either act the part of witnesses for God against the sinful courses of the day; or enter into the conspiracy of the generation against God. You cannot be neutral, however you may think to be so, Matth. xii. 30. *He that is not with me, (saith Christ,) is against me; and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth abroad.* Therefore consider well which to choose, and resolve to list yourselves forthwith on Christ's side. Say as Joshua, chap. xxiv. 15. *And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom you will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served, that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.*

"2. Know that this land is married unto the Lord in solemn Covenants, to reform what is amiss; and to preserve the Reformation in doctrine, worship, discipline and government; and to oppose whatsoever is contrary to sound godliness. And since that time, there have been speats of defection and apostacy from God. But among
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“ our fathers were found witnesses for God ; who,
 “ at the expence of all that was dear to them in
 “ the world, and even of their own lives, trans-
 “ mitted the testimony for truth and holiness to us.
 “ It lies upon your consciences to take it up, and
 “ maintain it ; for you must be answerable to God
 “ for it in your stations : And wo, wo will be to
 “ that generation in whose hand it falls. This
 “ was expressly enjoined to, and strongly inculca-
 “ ted upon the Jewish Church, as you may see
 “ from Psal. lxxviii. 5, 6, 7. *For he established a*
 “ *testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel,*
 “ *which he commanded our fathers, that they should*
 “ *make them known to their children : That the gene-*
 “ *ration to come might know them, even the children*
 “ *which should be born ; who should arise and declare*
 “ *them to their children : That they might set their*
 “ *hope in God, and not forget the works of God ; but*
 “ *keep his commandments.*

“ 3. The speat of irreligion, neglect and con-
 “ tempt of seriousness, runs so high among the
 “ young generation of this day, that ye are in
 “ great hazard of being carried away with it ; and
 “ can hardly miss to be so, if ye do not look well
 “ to yourselves.”

We exhort all in general, then, and particularly
 you of the young generation, to consider the ne-
 cessity of regeneration ; and the need you have to
 give yourselves early unto the Lord, by taking
 hold of his covenant of grace and promise by faith :
 And so, in the strength of that grace which it con-
 tains and exhibits to you, you will be in case to
 walk as the sons of God, harmless and without re-
 buke, cleaving to the way of truth and duty in
 your places and stations ; and testifying against what-
 soever is contrary to sound doctrine, and a practice
 becoming the gospel of Christ. In one word, be
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not discouraged, however few may seem to take part with you in the cause of truth and holiness: For God will not fail to make good his promise to the glorious Head and Husband of the Church; "Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth."

S E R M O N XXIII.

The spiritual Seed of CHRIST praising their heavenly Father.

PSAL. xlv. 17.

I will make thy Name to be remembered in all generations: Therefore shall the people praise thee for ever and ever.

JESUS CHRIST, the glorious Bridegroom of the Church, is the Alpha and Omega of this Psalm; with him the Psalmist both begins and ends it. *He is all and in all to the Church*; and it is highly reasonable, that all their praises should centre in him. In whom should all the seed of Israel glory, but in him in whom they are all justified, and in whose righteousness they are exalted? The preceding verse contains the promise of a spiritual seed to Christ, in virtue of his espousals with the Church; a seed of noble Princes, and these to be in all the earth. And in the words now read, we are informed, how that seed is to be employed in their several generations, and according to their places and stations in the world. They are to be remembering Christ, and praising him; that is their proper exercise

exercise, whatever others do. For this noble and honourable employment, they were chosen from eternity ; and to this end, they are formed in time by the Holy Spirit : Hence saith JEHOVAH concerning them, Isa. xxxiii. 21. " This people have " I formed for myself, they shall shew forth my " praise."

There are many who are careless and indifferent whether the name of Christ be had in remembrance or not ; and there are few, comparatively considered, who are disposed to lift up the burden of his praise ; but God will have him both remembered and praised, and that *for ever and ever*. " I will " make thy name to be remembered in all genera- " tions ; therefore shall the people praise thee for " ever and ever." In these words,

1. We have the Person promising, and the person to whom the promise is made. The Promiser is JEHOVAH, in the Person of the Father, from whose grace and kindness the whole work of our redemption and salvation takes its spring and rise ; as saith the Apostle, 2 Cor. v. 18. " All things are " of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Je- " sus Christ." The glorious Person to whom the promise is made, is JEHOVAH the Son, considered as the Surety, Redeemer, and Husband of the Church.

2. We have the promise itself, consisting of two branches.

(1.) God the Father engages to keep up a favoury remembrance of the Mediator's name, in all generations ; " I will make thy name to be remem- " bered in all generations." By Christ's name, we are to understand himself, and every thing whereby he is pleased to make himself known to us ; particularly, all those amiable designations, whereby he is set forth to us in his office-character ; of which

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after, if the Lord will. This blessed and glorious name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and every letter of it, God will have to be remembered in all generations. In one place of the world or other, it shall constantly be as the ointment poured forth: Hence saith the Psalmist, Psal. lxxii. 17. "His name shall endure for ever:" And again, saith he, Psal. cxlv. 4, 7. "One generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts. They shall abundantly utter the memory of thy great goodness, and shall sing of thy righteousness."

(2.) In the second branch of the promise, the Father engages to Christ, that there shall ever be a people praising him. *Therefore shall the people praise thee for ever and ever.* We may view these words, either as setting forth the effect of the promise in the first clause of the verse; "I will make thy name to be remembered in all generations:" And so the meaning will be, "because I will make thy name to be thus remembered in all generations; therefore, the people shall praise thee for ever and ever: Thy name shall be praised as long as it shall be remembered, and that shall be for ever and ever." Or we may understand the words, as setting forth the manner in which God will have the promise in the first clause of the verse to be accomplished; namely, in the praises of his people: "I will make thy name to be remembered in all generations:" And therefore, or to this end, viz. "that thy name may be thus remembered, the people shall praise thee for ever and ever: Thy name shall never be forgotten; for there shall always be a people confessing, celebrating and praising it. *The people shall praise thee for ever and ever.*"

3. We may observe the certainty that we have for the accomplishment of the promise in both its branches.

branches. Saith JEHOVAH, "I will make thy name to be remembered in all generations; therefore shall the people praise thee for ever and ever."

Let wicked men and devils do their utmost to bury the name of Christ in oblivion; yet there is no peradventure but that the promise shall be made good. Christ shall be remembered and praised while sun and moon endure. He shall be remembered and praised in the Church militant, to the latest posterity: And he shall be remembered and praised in the Church triumphant, for ever and ever. The doctrine contained in the text is,

Doct. That JEHOVAH the Father is engaged, by promise to Christ the Mediator; that he will cause his name to be had in perpetual remembrance, and his praises to be celebrated for ever and ever: "I will make thy name to be remembered in all generations; therefore shall the people praise thee for ever and ever." In discoursing farther from this text and doctrine, the method which we propose, through divine assistance, to observe, is,

I. To speak a little of Christ's name.

II. To mention some things imported in the promise; "I will make thy name to be remembered in all generations."

III. To shew, that as Christ's name shall be remembered in all generations; so there shall be a people praising him for ever and ever.

IV. To enquire a little into the causes and reasons for which the people shall praise Christ for ever and ever.

V. To apply.

I. The first thing proposed, was to speak a little of

of Christ's name ; or endeavour to shew, what we are to understand by it.

Many are the names which we find given to our Lord Jesus in Scripture ; and of each of them it may truly be said, that it is wonderful. For, as the Prophet saith concerning his generation, Isa. liii. 8. so may we say concerning his name, *who shall declare it ?* By the name of Christ, in general, we may understand himself. Thus we find the name in Scripture is frequently put for the person, as in Rev. iii. 4. "Thou hast a few names," (that is, persons) "even in Sardis, which have not defiled their garments." And when it is said concerning Christ, Matth xii. 21. "In his name shall the Gentiles trust:" The meaning is, that the Gentiles shall put their trust and confidence in the person of Christ. They shall believe in him *to the saving of their souls.*

But more particularly, we may mention a few of the many names which we find given to him in Scripture. And,

1. We find him called *the mighty God*, Isa. ix. 6. "His name shall be called the mighty God." It is to him that the Father saith, verse 6th of this Psalm ; "thy throne O God is for ever and ever." Arians and Socinians have strained every nerve to obliterate the remembrance of this name in the world, by denying the supreme Deity of our Lord Jesus ; and so have endeavoured to destroy the foundation of all our hope and confidence. But this name God will have believingly confessed, remembered, and praised in all generations ; for *his name shall be called the mighty God.*

2. His name is IMMANUEL, that is, *God with us*, Matth. i. 23. God in our nature, God on our side. As the children whom he came to redeem were "partakers of flesh and blood, he likewise took
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“part of the same.” He is become *bone of their bone, and flesh of their flesh*; and therefore, “he is not ashamed to call them brethren.” O what a pleasant sight is it, to behold God in Christ! When we take a view of him in the glass of nature’s light, we see him as a God infinitely above us: And when we view him in the glass of the written law, we see him to be a God angry with us; because we have defaced his image, and trampled his authority under our feet. But when we behold him in Christ, then we see him in our own nature, and as pacified towards us in him; and may warrantably say with the Church, in the language of faith, Psal. xli. 11. “The Lord of hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge.”

3. We find our Lord Jesus called *the MESSIAH, or the Anointed One*. By this name he was known to the Fathers under the Old Testament; and it signifies the same with Christ, by which name he is frequently designed in the New. Hence saith Andrew to Simon Peter his brother, John i. 41. “We have found the Messiah; which is, being interpreted, the Christ.” By this name the glorious Bridegroom of the Church is set before us, as anointed by the Father; to the threefold office of Prophet, Priest, and King: And so fully authorised to execute the same, and abundantly qualified for that onerous undertaking. This is a most desirable name; and a name, the savoury remembrance of which God will have preserved in all generations: That poor sinners of mankind may read in it, the commission which the Saviour hath to save them, his ample endowments for saving work, and the sufficient warrant that they have to put their trust and confidence in him; as by this name they see him as made of God unto them *wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption*.

4. Another name whereby he is called, is *Jesus* a Saviour. This name was given to him by the angel, before he was conceived in the womb, Luke i. 31. and is expressive of the great blessing which sinners were to enjoy from him, viz. salvation; salvation from sin, the worst, yea the only evil, Matth. i. 21. The gospel, strictly taken, is just a declaration, that *Jesus Christ is come into the world to save sinners*; of whom the chief are not excepted. Hence saith the Apostle Paul, 1 Tim. i. 15. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." This is a name which God will have perpetuated in all generations; and it is a name whereby Christ delights to be known. Hence we see, when the Prophet asks his name, saying, "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with died garments from Bozrah? This, that is glorious in his apparel," &c.: The answer which he gives him is, "I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save." Do you desire to be informed who I am? would he say; then know, that I am your faithful Redeemer: and that all which I have promised concerning your salvation, I have spoken it in righteousness; that is, with a real design to do as I have said: And as I have spoken in righteousness, so I am likewise able to give a being to the accomplishment of all that I have promised concerning my Church and people; for I am *mighty to save*. God the Father has entrusted Christ with the great work and business of bringing many Sons to glory; and he would have us firmly to be persuaded, that he is faithful to the trust committed unto him, and every way equal to that high and honourable undertaking.

5. Another name whereby our glorious Surety is designed, is, *the Lord our righteousness*, Jer. xxiii.

6. "In his days, Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: And this is his name whereby he shall be called, the Lord our Righteousness."

This is a name by which all the believing company who have gone before us, have been brought to call him. And this name of his shall never be forgotten. God will have some giving him this name in all generations; and taking the benefit of it to his praise, and to their own unspeakable comfort and advantage; saying each for himself, and herself, in particular, *in the Lord have I righteousness. The Lord our Righteousness*, is that name of Jesus to which the sinner is brought, in a particular manner, to betake himself by faith, when he is pursued by the law curse; because in that name he sees that righteousness which is a complete answer to all the demands which he hears the law making upon him.

In a word, we have a cluster of Christ's names, Isa. ix. 6. His name is "Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of peace." His name is *Wonderful*. He is wonderful in his person; being God manifested in the flesh, God and man in one Divine person. He is wonderful in all his works. "He hath done excellent things." The work of redemption is indeed a wonderful work; and sought out of all them who take pleasure in it. His name is the *Counsellor*; and good and gracious is the counsel which he gives to sinners; as you may see, Rev. iii. 17. He is *The everlasting Father*; and so his children shall never be left orphans. His name is *The Prince of peace*: He hath made peace between heaven and earth by the blood of his cross. And as a Prince, he commands peace in the troubled conscience; by applying the virtue and efficacy of his blood to it, by his holy Spirit. Many other names

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we find given to this glorious Person in Scripture: Such as, "the Messenger of the covenant; our Hope; the propitiation for our sins; the Prince of the kings of the earth; the Prince of life; and the Lord of glory." And the Apostle John designs this glorious Person, "him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood," Rev. i. 5, 6. So much for a short account of that worthy name by the which we are called; and which God will have to be remembered in all generations, both to his own glory, and to the unspeakable advantage of sinners of mankind.

II. The *second* thing in the method, was to mention some things imported in the promise; "I will make thy name to be remembered in all generations." And,

1. The promise imports, that it is no easy matter to keep up the remembrance of Christ's name in a sinful world.

To do it is a work that God hath taken into his own hand, in an eminent manner; and indeed there is no hand but that of omnipotence that is equal to the undertaking. Satan and his emissaries have been using their best endeavours, in all past ages, to have Christ's name buried: Sometimes by using open violence against the confessors and professors of it; and at other times, by secret fraud. Satan is busy attempting the burial of Christ's name in the day wherein we live; and we may expect that he will be employing himself in the same hellish work in all ages yet to come. There will always be some disposed to say, concerning the Lord and his Anointed, as in Psal. ii. 3. "Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us." But, as he that sitteth in heaven hath undertaken the keeping up of the remembrance of IMMANUEL's name in all generations; so he

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will laugh at every attempt of hell and earth to defeat his promise, and beat down all the opposition that shall be made to the full accomplishment of it: Hence says he, Psal. lxxxix. 22, 23. "The enemy shall not exact upon him, nor the son of wickedness afflict him. I will beat down his foes before his face, and plague them that hate him." There is no letter of Christ's name but his enemies have been endeavouring to obliterate; but God hath hitherto taken occasion, from all the obscuring vails which have been cast over it, to cause it shine forth with the more eminent lustre and glory: And he will continue to do so to the end; for our glorious Surety *must increase*, and *upon his own head shall the crown flourish*.

2. The promise implies, that Christ's name is very dear and precious to God the Father. However little many value and prize the name of our glorious IMMANUEL, it is much set by in God's sight and esteem. It is a name in which he greatly delights, and which he will have to be glorified. Jesus Christ is the man whom the great King delights to honour; and whom he will have all men to honour, even as they do himself. God the Father was delighting himself in Christ from all eternity; and that not only as his eternal Son, but also considered as the Surety of an elect world, Prov. viii. 30.; and he is still delighting himself in him as sustaining that character. It is of him that he is presently saying to us; "Behold my servant whom I uphold, mine elect in whom my soul delighteth." Yea, such is that complacency and delight which the Father hath in Christ, that he has no pleasure in any of the sons of men until they are brought forward by his grace to put honour upon his beloved Son; by believing in him, and trusting him with the whole work of their sal-

vation. It is not till then, that he can behold them with a pleasant countenance. Hence saith the Psalmist, Psal. cxlvii. 11. "The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him, and in those that hope in his mercy." It is true, it is neither their fearing the Lord, nor their hoping in his mercy, that is the procuring cause of his taking pleasure and delight in them; but until he bring them to that exercise, communion and fellowship with him cannot be their attainment; for, *what communion hath light with darkness?*

3. The promise implies the maintenance and preservation of all the means of Divine appointment, for keeping up the remembrance of Christ's name. As God hath been pleased to institute means for this end, so he will see to the preservation of them. But more particularly here,

The promise of making Christ's name to be remembered in all generations implies,

(1.) That God will have a professing and confessing Church, in one place or other of the world, in all generations. The Church may be more or less visible, and her outward condition more or less prosperous and flourishing, as seemeth good to her glorious Head; and particular Churches may so far apostatise and backslide, as to become synagogues of Satan: But yet notwithstanding, the Lord will still have a Church upon the earth to latest posterity. She has stood from the beginning, and will endure unto the end: For she is built upon Christ himself, the immoveable rock; and therefore "the gates of hell shall not prevail against her."

(2.) The promise says, that the Scriptures shall be preserved in all generations. If Christ's name be remembered in all generations, then the Scriptures must also be preserved; for *these are they which testify of him*, John v. 39. God hath from

the beginning preserved the lively oracles, both before and since they were committed to writing; and he hath assured us that he will do so to the end: Hence says he to the Church, Isa. lix. 21. "As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord; my spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever." In the 19th verse of the same chapter, the Lord promises, that when the enemies of the Church shall, at any time, come in upon her like a flood, his Spirit shall lift up a standard against them: And, in verse 20th, we see what the standard is, which the Holy Spirit lifts up against the Church's enemies; namely, Christ himself. And among other special and distinguishing instances of his favour to his Church, he promises the perpetual continuance of his word with her for her instruction; and of his Spirit for her direction, sanctification, and consolation; declaring, that the one shall not depart out of the hearts of his people, nor the other out of their mouth: But that they shall perpetually be continued with them, and with their seed after them, unto the end of the world.

(3.) The promise implies, that the glorious gospel shall be preached in all generations. The preaching of the gospel is a special mean which the Lord is pleased to make use of, for keeping up the remembrance of Christ's name in the world. Yea, there is such a connection betwixt Christ's name and the gospel, that we find the one sometimes put for the other; as in Acts ix. 15. where the Apostle Paul is said to be a *chosen vessel to bear Christ's name before the Gentiles*; that is, he was a chosen

The Spiritual Seed of Christ

chosen instrument for preaching the gospel to the Gentiles. The faithful, free and open preaching of the gospel, is so much adapted to the end of keeping up the remembrance of Christ's name, that it has been an eye-sore to Satan and wicked men in all generations; and their shafts have been chiefly set against the preachers of it. And the more faithfully they have been enabled to discharge their duty, the more fierce has the rage of persecutors been against them.

(4.) The promise says, that the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper shall be administered in all generations; and preserved from the mixture of human inventions, in one place of the world or other, to latest posterity. These holy ordinances, dispensed according to Divine appointment, have a special fitness in them for keeping up the favourable remembrance of that worthy name by the which we are called.

The ends and uses of the Sacrament of Baptism are to signify and seal our ingrafting into Christ, or our union with him; and consequently, the imputation of his righteousness to us: Hence saith the Apostle, Gal. iii. 27. "As many of you as have been baptized unto Christ, have put on Christ." Baptism is likewise a seal of our interest in all the benefits of the Covenant of Grace; such as, remission of sins, regeneration, adoption, and a glorious resurrection unto eternal life. And the consequence of its being signified and sealed to us in our baptism, and our partaking of such great and precious benefits, is, that we enter into an open and professed engagement to be the Lord's: And that in all that we are, soul, body and spirit; and in all that we have, whether gifts, graces or worldly comforts: Renouncing sin, Satan and the world, as being his rivals and competitors; saying with Ephraim,

Ephraim, Hof. xiv. 8. "What have I to do any more with idols?" The Sacrament of Baptism is a glass wherein you may behold both your own pollution and defilement, and the fountain which God hath opened for the removal of it: And the ministerial application of the water in baptism, points forth the agency of the Holy Spirit; in the application of the virtue and efficacy of the Redeemer's blood to the soul, in order to its cleansing.

The Sacrament of the Supper is designed to set Christ before us, in all his fulness of grace and glory. It is appointed to beget and keep up upon our spirits, a savoury remembrance of his grace; in virtue of which, although "he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich."

This ordinance is wonderfully suited to keep up the remembrance of Christ's love to lost sinners of Adam's family: The necessity of his incarnation, obedience, sufferings and death; putting the case that any of mankind should be saved from sin and wrath. In this ordinance, we may likewise see, that the obedience and death of our Lord Jesus are most sweet, savoury and satisfactory to God the Father; and that they have opened up a channel for the rich fruits of the Divine love, to flow forth to men in the most perfect consistency with the honour of all the Divine attributes and perfections.

Moreover, in this ordinance, the way in which we come actually to partake of Christ, in all his fulness, is clearly set forth; that it is through a particular improvement of him by faith. The end and design then, of the institution of the Sacrament of our Lord's Supper, being to keep up the savoury remembrance of him; and of what he hath done and suffered, in the room and stead of his people: God will see to the preservation of it with the

the Church, in its original purity and simplicity, in all generations; as he hath hitherto done, even in the darkest times of Popery and superstition.

5. We may conclude from this promise of the Father to the Son, that he will not leave himself without a witness to that form of government which he hath appointed to be observed in the Church: And which every intelligent person, who consults the word of God without prepossession, (with the subordinate helps which they are favoured with, particularly the notes on Church-government bound in with the Westminster Confession of Faith), may evidently see, to be neither Erastian upon the one hand, whereby the external order and polity of the Church is given into the hand of the civil magistrate; nor yet Independent upon the other, whereby the keys of the kingdom of heaven are given into the hands of what some call the Community of the faithful: But that it is Presbyterial, consisting in the due subordination of one judicatory to another.

Erastianism and Independency are two extremes; both which, faithful witnesses for Christ, particularly in our native land, have been careful to avoid: And many of them have resisted unto blood, contending for the free and independent nature of his kingdom upon the kingdoms of this world.

That Jesus Christ is sole King and Head of the Church; and that in all her spiritual concerns she is subject to none but him, as her Head, both of government and influences; are truths which he hath given to his witnesses in these lands, to be contended for by him, as being in an eminent manner *the word of his patience*: And they are truths which this text intimates he will still have to be maintained.

Finally, This promise evidently implies, that the Holy

Holy Spirit is to abide with the Church in all generations. It is the Spirit's work to glorify Christ, John xvi. 14. and to testify of him, John xv. 26. and so to cause his name to be remembered in all generations. It is promised concerning the Spirit, that he shall lift up a standard against all the opposition that shall ever be made to the remembrance of Christ's name, either from hell or earth, Isa. lix. 19. Hence our Lord tells his disciples, when he was about to leave them, as to his bodily presence, John xiv. 16. "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth," &c. And to the same purpose is his promise to the Church, at his ascension into heaven, Matth. xxviii. 20. "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world, Amen." As if he had said, 'I am now going my way to him that sent me, and to be no more with you in respect of my bodily presence; but be assured, that my spiritual and gracious presence shall be with you, my disciples and followers, while you are in this world; and with those who shall succeed you in the work of the gospel; and with all who really believe in me, through their testimony, to the end of the world.'

Thus we see, that our Lord Jesus is, and will be graciously present with his Church, in and by his Spirit, to cause his own name to be had in remembrance in all generations. The keeping up of the remembrance of Christ's name, is the leading object of the attention of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, ONE JEHOVAH; and therefore, there is no reason to fear that ever it shall be forgotten. "I will make thy name to be remembered in all generations; therefore shall the people praise thee for ever and ever."

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We shall not insist further upon the doctrinal part at the time, but conclude with a few inferences from what hath been said. And,

1. Hence see, the sinfulness, folly, and vanity of every endeavour to blot out the remembrance of Christ's name. There have not been wanting in all ages, those who have endeavoured to bury this blessed and glorious name in oblivion: Some endeavouring to blot out one letter of it, and some another: Some denying that our Lord Jesus is numerically one in nature and essence with the Father and the Holy Spirit; others denying that he made a proper and real satisfaction to the justice of God, as a Surety-priest, in the law-room and stead of sinners; affirming, that he suffered and died only to confirm the truth of his doctrine, and to leave us a pattern of obedience to the law, and set us an example of patience and resignation under sufferings: While others have endeavoured to lead men into themselves for a righteousness; upon the matter denying that the righteousness of Christ is the alone ground of the sinner's justification before God, and of his acceptance in his sight. And in our own day, there is scarce any part of Divine truth but is struck at; and some among us are even proclaiming a liberty to the generation, to make light of every truth of Christ, the knowledge whereof is not reckoned absolutely necessary to salvation. But whatever Satan, and men of corrupt minds have done, or may attempt against the name of Jesus, God will have it kept in remembrance; he hath taken the work of keeping it in remembrance into his own hand, and there it must prosper. "I will make thy name to be remembered in all generations."

2. We may see what is the duty of all who would evidence themselves to be really the friends of Christ, in this declining and apostatizing age, wherein

wherein he is so much despised and rejected. It is certainly highly incumbent upon them, to contribute their part to keep up the remembrance of Christ's name. The bulk of this generation, for any thing which appears in their practice, are *minding their own things*, and not those things which be Jesus Christ's. And, in such a time, the friends of Christ should certainly bestir themselves; in the way of being *zealously affected* in contributing to have a savoury remembrance of Christ's name kept up in the world, for it is *a good thing*.

Ministers, who would desire to be found faithful to Christ, should not only endeavour to preserve and perpetuate the remembrance of his name; by preaching the gospel faithfully, dispensing the Sacraments according to his appointment; and endeavouring, with all possible care and diligence, to separate between the precious and the vile, in their admissions to these holy mysteries; and by a faithful and impartial exercise of the discipline of the Church upon offenders: But they ought also, both in a doctrinal and juridical manner, to testify against every thing that has a tendency to banish the remembrance of Christ's name out of the world. In a word, they ought to testify against the errors, sins and corruptions of the times; and particularly, against those errors and immoralities which prevail most in the places where Providence orders their lot.

But not only are ministers of the gospel bound in duty, to endeavour to have Christ's name had in remembrance; but it is likewise the duty of those in a private station, to contribute their share for this end, according to their places and stations in the world.

Do you then, ask, after what manner shall we, who are in a private station, contribute our share

to the keeping up of the remembrance of Christ's name? We answer,

(1.) You are to do so, by a conscientious and careful attendance upon all the ordinances of God; and by receiving the truth in the love of it, when and where it is held forth unto you, from the Lord's word, in its purity and simplicity: Refusing, at the same time, to lend your ear to the instruction that has a tendency to draw men aside from the way that leads to the true and saving knowledge of Christ; according to that exhortation which you have Prov. xix. 27. "Cease, my son, to hear the instruction that causeth to err from the words of knowledge." There are some who think, that they can with safety attend upon ordinances, where they hear many things advanced not agreeable to the form of sound words; because they apprehend, that they can take the good, and cast the bad away. But not to insist, in order to expose the import of such a manner of thinking, speaking and acting; it may suffice to observe, that it is directly opposite to the express mandate of the Holy Ghost just now adduced; and argues these persons to be in a great measure strangers to the deceit and treachery of their own hearts.

(2.) You are to contribute to the keeping up the remembrance of Christ's name, by making an open and explicit acknowledgment of all his truths before the world, when you have a call in providence to do it: You are not to be ashamed publicly to own and confess what you believe to be the truth of God; nor to reject and disavow what you know to be contrary to sound doctrine and the power of godliness: For Christ hath assured us, that he will be ashamed of those another day, who are ashamed of him now, Matth. x. 32. Zion is indispensably bound to confess her God, and that in the most open

open and explicit manner; and particularly, when he is openly dishonoured, and his truths and way run down. The Apostle intimates, that confession with the mouth is as necessary in its own place unto salvation,—complete salvation; as believing with the heart is unto justification. Hence says he, Rom. x. 10. “With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”

(3.) You are to do so, by making conscience of observing the worship of God in your families, (such of you as are favoured with them.) The diligent and careful observation of God’s worship, in a family capacity, is a special mean whereby heads of families have it in their power to beget and keep up a savoury remembrance of Christ’s name upon the spirits of their children and servants. It is for a lamentation that this duty is so much slighted in our day; and particularly, in this countryside. Alas! how many families are there, wherein the very shadow of this duty is not to be found; except, it may be, upon Sabbath days, when they think they have nothing else to do. And those who profess more regard for this mean of fellowship with God, yet generally content themselves with setting about it in the evening only; pretending, that their worldly business does not permit them to offer the morning sacrifice to God. Those who habitually neglect to worship God in their family capacity, are ranking themselves among the heathen, though they dwell in a Christian land; and so are in the greatest hazard of sharing a harder lot in the latter day than those who never heard of Christ. And although, alas! they have the example of multitudes to follow now, in neglecting this duty, and the other means of Divine appointment, in the use of which the Lord’s blessing may be

be expected; it will not furnish an excuse for them in the day of judgment: For then *the wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.*" In one word here, there is great reason to apprehend, that those who are habitual neglecters of family duties, pay but little regard to the duty of secret prayer, meditation, &c. True religion is an uniform thing; and the truly godly man suffers not one duty to set aside another.

(4.) You are to contribute your share to the keeping up of the remembrance of Christ's name in the world, by a holy and circumspect walk and conversation. The friends of Christ are to witness for him, not only by evidencing a hearty regard for all his truths, and all his ordinances for worship; but also, by a holy walk and deportment in the world, endeavouring to imitate him, by following his example. Hence saith the beloved disciple, *John ii. 6.* "He that saith he abideth in him, (*viz.* in Christ,) ought himself also to walk even as he walked." Not that any man can come fully up to his example; but every man who really desires to cast in his mite to the keeping up of the remembrance of Christ's name in the world, must really endeavour to walk even as he did; and will, through grace, make it his constant study to do so. And, in so far as any are enabled to do it, it has a noble tendency to keep the world in mind of Christ. In a word, to conclude,

Let the people of God be much exercised in the pleasant work of remembering and praising Christ. O but it is a sweet employment to remember and praise Christ! It is the very work of heaven. Our Lord Jesus is infinitely worthy to be thought upon and praised: He is the sweet-smelling rose of Sharon. He is the perfection of beauty; and fairer than the children of men. He hath done that for

you

you which all the angels in heaven, and men upon earth, could never have effected: He has restored the Divine image to you, which you wickedly changed for the likeness of Satan, by your sin in the first Adam: He has fulfilled the righteousness of the law for you; yea *magnified the law and made it honourable*: He has drunk up the torrent of Divine wrath, that did run in the way of your restoration into the grace and favour of God: He has delivered you from the curse of the law, having been *made a curse for you*: He hath destroyed Satan, evacuated his power, and cast him out. For by his giving a complete satisfaction to the law and justice of God, the devil is spoiled of his armour wherein he trusted, and death is disarmed of its deadly sting: So that you may, in the language of faith, challenge it to do its worst; saying with the Apostle Paul, *1 Cor. xv. 55. O death where is thy sting?* And as he hath taken the sting out of death, so he hath likewise vanquished the grave its fellow; so that you may say unto it, *where is thy victory?* Think upon these things, and pray that the Lord may form you more and more for himself: That so you may be the better in case to think of his loving-kindness, and praise him; and that, both upon the account of what he is in himself, what he is to you, and what he has done for you already, and what he will yet do. And as to you who are yet strangers to this glorious Person, whom God will have to be remembered and praised in all generations; we exhort you to believe in him, as exhibited to you in the gospel. It is your duty to remember him, and to praise him: But until you see him by the eye of faith, and receive the new heart and the right spirit from him; you can neither act for his glory in this world, nor be admitted to the enjoyment of him in the world to come.

Pray

Pray then, that God may be pleased to destroy the vail of darkness that is covering the eyes of your understanding, and bring you to *see the King in his beauty*; and then you will remember him with delight: And having your souls filled with the marrow and fat of the new covenant, your mouth shall praise him with joyful lips; and you will think with pleasure upon the promise in the text, because it secures a revenue of praise to his worthy Name in all generations.

S E R M O N XXIV.

PSAL. xlv. 17.

I will make thy name to be remembered in all generations: Therefore shall the people praise thee for ever and ever.

[The second Sermon on the Text.]

HAVING spoken a little from these words formerly, after offering some division and explication of them, we observed the following doctrine from them; namely,

Doct. That **JEHOVAH** the Father is engaged, by promise to Christ the Mediator, that he will cause his name to be had in perpetual remembrance, and his praises to be celebrated for ever and ever.

The method proposed was,

I. To speak a little of Christ's name.

II. To mention some things implied in the promise; "I will make thy name, to be remembered in all generations."

III. To

III. To shew, that as Christ's name shall be remembered in all generations, so there shall be a people praising him for ever and ever.

IV. To enquire a little into the grounds and reasons for which the people shall praise Christ for ever and ever.

V. To apply. And all was undertaken as the Lord should be pleased to assist and direct.

Having already spoken to the two first heads in the method, we now proceed to the third; which was,

III. To shew, that as Christ's name shall be remembered in all generations; so there shall be a people praising him for ever and ever. And here we may,

First, Mention a few things which we take to be supposed in a person or people their praising Christ.

Secondly, Shew, that there shall be a people praising Christ for ever and ever.

First, It was proposed to mention a few things, which we take to be supposed in a person or people their praising Christ. And,

(1.) We think this exercise of praising Christ supposes saving acquaintance with him. Those only are in case to praise Christ, to whom he hath been graciously pleased to manifest forth his glory; and to whom he hath given the spiritual eye to behold it. Those who do not know Christ, cannot praise him; and those who know him in a saving manner, cannot but praise him: For every praiseworthy excellency is to be found in him. He is fairer than the children of men; and as is the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, so is he among the sons. When persons are once admitted to behold this glorious King in his beauty, then they are dis-

posed

posed to make him a covering to their eyes from all other lords and lovers. A faith's view of Christ casts a vail over all created excellency. The profits, pleasures, and honours of a present world, fall low in the esteem of those who are really favoured with a saving sight of Christ: As we see in the case of Moses, who seeing him who is invisible, *refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter*; preferring an afflicted lot with the people of God, above all the treasures of Egypt, Heb. xl. 24. And whatever any have thought they had attained unto in spirituals, before they knew Christ; we see what a low estimate they set upon it when once they come to be really acquainted with him, Phil. iii. 7, 8. The Apostle thought he had gained much, and that he stood fair for eternal life upon the footing of his own personal righteousness; as every proud legalist does: But when once it *pleased God to reveal his Son* in him, then he saw, that all that he had been doing to save himself was but lost labour; and viewed that as unspeakably vile, which before he had considered as most excellent and valuable.

The promise then, that Christ shall be praised in all generations, intimates, that there shall be some, however few, in every generation, who shall be brought forward to the saving knowledge of him, *as the Lord their righteousness*.

(2.) The promise that Christ shall be praised in all generations, supposes that there shall be some inspired with true love to him in every generation. Persons are not disposed to commend and praise those persons for whom they have little or no love and esteem. Although there may be perhaps some things about them which are praise-worthy; yet want of love to them, may be ready to render our acknowledgments of their worth very inadequate to what it really is. Jesus Christ is a most amiable

amiable and lovely person in himself, and possessed of every excellency fit to recommend him to our highest esteem and regard: But, for want of faith in him, and love unto him, many are so far from praising him, that they are employed in nothing so much as in acting to his dishonour. Persons must have their hearts circumcised to love a three-one God in Christ, before they can praise him in an acceptable manner. He must first form the people for himself, before they can shew forth his praise, Isa. xxxiii. 21. It was when the spouse had her heart full of love to Christ, that she abounded so much in praising him; as you see, Cant. v. 10.—The duty and exercise then of praising Christ, flows from love to him; and our love to him must be kindled at the fire of his love to us: “We love him because he first loved us.” And saith the Psalmist, Psal cxvi. 1. “I love the Lord because he hath heard my voice;” and then he adds, verse 11th, “What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits.”

3. The exercise of giving praise and thanks to Christ, supposes a humble and thankful frame of spirit. Those can never praise Christ from the heart, who are not humbled and emptied of self; and so determined, by the power of grace, to submit to that righteousness which he hath wrought in the room and stead of sinful men. The legalist, when he would even seem, at first view, to be praising God, is really doing nothing else but sacrificing to his own net; as we see in the case of that proud Pharisee, of whom you read Luke xviii. 9, 10, 11. No man will really praise Christ, and be thankful to God for him, until he is determined by grace to give up with all legal confidences; casting himself entirely upon the Divine mercy, as it flows forth to sinners in the costly and precious

channel of the obedience and death of his dear Son. Jesus Christ is made of God unto us "wisdom, "righteousness, sanctification and redemption." That, according as it is written, "he that glorieth, "let him glory in the Lord." 1 Cor. i. 30, 31. And as God hath made Christ to be every thing to men, in the business of their salvation; so men must take up with him, in all that God hath made him to be unto them, in order that they may be in case to glory in him. All true glorying in Christ is the result of union to his person, and an interest by faith in his justifying righteousness: Hence saith the Prophet Isa. xlv. 25. "In the Lord shall all "the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory."

4. The promise that Christ shall be praised for ever and ever, supposes that God will form some in every generation for the sweet and comely exercise of shewing forth his praise; according to his promise, Isa. xliii. 20, 21. "The beasts of the field "shall honour me, the dragons and the owls.— "This people have I formed for myself, they shall "shew forth my praise." Men, in their natural state and condition, are altogether unfit for the duty and exercise of praising Christ; but he will form a people for himself, and then they shall shew forth his praise. However low religion may be in any particular generation; and although regeneration and converting work may sometimes be, in a great measure, at a stand in the Churches; yet the entail of Christ's seed shall never be cut off. There have been, and there will still be, some ages where in the Church is not the mother of so many children as in others; but she will never become altogether barren. Jesus Christ must see his seed, there must be always some in every generation to praise him; for "his name shall endure for ever, "and last as the sun." The father to the son must

must praise him : Hence saith the Psalmist, Psal. cxlv. 4. "One generation shall praise thy works to another ; and shall declare thy mighty acts." Our Lord Jesus must be praised : For if men should hold their peace, the very stones would cry out ; as he intimates to the Pharisees, when they desired him to rebuke his Disciples for rejoicing in and praising God, Luke xix. 40. "He answered and said unto them, I tell you, that if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out." Some think, that our Lord in these words had an eye to the Gentiles ; who were lying as it were in the quarry of nature, and quite unpolished for the spiritual building : And that he meant to inform the Jews, how ready the poor Gentiles were to be brought into his service, should they be so insensible of their own mercy as to cast off his yoke. But whatever may be in this, we may safely view the words as setting forth, and that in the strongest light, that it is absolutely necessary that Jesus Christ be praised.

Secondly, It was proposed on this head, to shew, that there shall be a people praising Christ for ever and ever. And,

(1.) This truth will appear, when it is considered that JEHOVAH the Father hath engaged himself, by promise to Christ, that he shall still be praised. "The people shall praise thee for ever and ever." Christ is to see his seed in all generations, Isa. liii. 11. ; and whatever others may do, that seed shall praise him. Wisdom will be justified of her children. Many are the promises which the Father hath made to the Son, that he shall still be praised : "A seed," says he, "shall serve him ; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation. They shall come, and they shall declare his righteousness, unto a people that shall be born,"

"born, that he hath done this," Psal. xxii. 30, 31. And, in another Psalm, it is written; "He shall live, and to him shall be given of the gold of Sheba: Prayer also shall be made for him, and daily shall he be praised." They shall praise the King, and pray for the prosperity of his kingdom.

(2.) This truth will appear, when we consider that the great and leading design of Christ, in the whole work of redemption and salvation, is to bring in a revenue of praise to the crown of heaven. "He gave himself for" the Church, "that he might redeem" her "from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works," Tit. ii. 14. Christ gave himself for his people, to the end that they, being delivered from the thralldom of sin and Satan, might serve him, their glorious Deliverer, with holy zeal and activity; praising him with the heart, with the lip, and in their lives and conversations: Hence saith the Psalmist, speaking of the redemption of the whole Church by Jesus Christ, after lamenting the general depravity of human nature, Psal. xiv. 7. "When the Lord bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad." They shall be glad and rejoice in him who hath brought them back from their spiritual captivity, into a state of light, liberty and enlargement. And as he gave himself for the Church, that, by making a purchase of her to himself, he might bring in an eternal revenue of praise to God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit: So this is also his great and leading design, in the application of the purchased redemption to them by his Spirit: Hence saith he, Isa. xliii. 21. "This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise." In the day of a sinner's conversion, the Holy Spirit brings

brings up "the fir-tree," as it were, "instead of the thorn;" and "the myrtle-tree instead of the brier." And this he doth to the end that it may be "to the Lord for a name, and for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off." What a noxious creature is man, in his natural state? He is like the briars and thorns of the wilderness,—cruel, offensive and troublesome, ready to tear every passenger. And what a mighty change does regenerating grace make upon him? From the pricking brier, and the galling thorn, it brings him to resemble the fir-tree and the myrtle; which are beautiful, harmless, useful, and afford an agreeable shadow for the weary traveller to recline himself under. And this change is brought about to the eternal praise of God, and to be an enduring monument and evidence of his kindness to men through Christ Jesus; and of the irresistible power and efficacy of his Spirit and grace, in producing such a change. Moreover, we are told by an Apostle, that our heavenly Father begets his children by the word of truth, that they may be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures, Jam. i. 18.; that is, that they may be presented unto him as a thanksgiving-offering: As the children of Israel offered the first fruits of their increase to the Lord, in token of their gratitude and thankfulness to him for his bounty bestowed upon them.

Finally, To extol, praise and magnify him that sitteth on the throne, and the worthy Lamb that was slain, will be a leading branch of the work and exercise of the redeemed company in the Church triumphant, for ever and ever. Jesus Christ will be for ever glorified in and by his saints; and admired in all them who now believe in him, and receive the testimony of his Spirit concerning him. Here the people praise him but in a very imperfect, faint and

and languid manner; but *when mortality shall be swallowed up of life*, the people shall have their garments of praise enlarged in a suitableness to their perfect stature. They are but very faint essays which the people of God can make at lifting up the burden of his praise, while they sojourn in the wilderness of this world; and they are apt soon to weary in the work of praising him: They meet with many discouragements; and although their spirits be willing, yet their flesh is but weak: But when they shall enter into the King's palace, they shall experience no incumbrances in the praising exercise; nor ever find the least occasion to hang their harps upon the willows, to the never-failing ages of eternity, Rev. iv. 8. "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come." They rest not day nor night, and yet they do not weary; for their everlasting work will prove to be their everlasting rest and refreshment. The inhabitants of the higher house shall never join trembling with their mirth, sorrow and sighing having fled away. In the paradise above, Israel shall rejoice to purpose in him that made him; and there the children of Zion shall be joyful in their King.

IV. The fourth thing in the method, was to inquire a little into the grounds and reasons for which there shall be a people praising Christ for ever and ever. And,

1. There shall be a people praising Christ for ever and ever, upon the account of his own personal dignity, worth and excellency. Our Lord Jesus Christ is God equal with the Father and Holy Spirit: He is the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person: Hence says he, *He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father*, John xiv.

9. Our Lord Jesus, then, being possessed of the same nature, attributes, and perfections with the Father and Holy Spirit; he doth, and shall for ever inherit the same revenue of praise and adoration with them: He possesses the same throne, and the same honour with the Father, Rev. xxii. 1.

2. There shall be a people praising Christ for ever and ever, upon the account of what he hath done for them; as you see Rev. v. 9. Although all the praises of his people are to terminate in his Person, in respect of which only he is the object of worship; yet the consideration of what he has done and suffered for his people, and in their stead, as their Surety and Mediator, and which he could never have performed had he not been pleased to assume their nature; are sweet and powerful motives, to excite and stir them up to love and praise him: While they are still to consider the Divinity of his Person, as the formal ground and reason of their praising him as Mediator.

If it should then be asked, What hath our Lord Jesus done for the people that shall be praising him for ever and ever? We may answer, He hath done infinitely more for them than men or angels can declare. Indeed what he hath done for them is perfectly known only to himself. We shall only mention a few of the many excellent things which he hath done for his people, and for which they will be for ever praising him. And,

(1.) He was graciously pleased to become their Surety in the council of peace. In that character, he was set up from everlasting; as he tells us Prov. viii. 30. And the Apostle to the Hebrews expressly designs him the Surety of the better testament, chap. vii. 22. This Suretiship, into which our Lord Jesus was graciously pleased to enter, did cost him very dear; and he perfectly knew that it would

would do so, when he came into it; for known unto the Lord are all his works from the beginning. Many of the suretiships which are entered into among men, would be declined; did men certainly foresee the consequences of them, and the expence and trouble to which they are frequently exposed by them. But although all the grief, sorrow and suffering, to which our Lord's becoming surety for an elect world was to expose him, were most certainly known unto him: He did nevertheless strike hands with the justice of God, as the Surety of his people, in the most prompt and chearful manner. Hence says he to the Father, Psal. xl. 6, 7, 8. "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears thou hast opened; burnt-offering, and sin-offering hast thou not desired. Then said I, Lo, I come; in the volume of the book, it is written of me: I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart." The demands of justice did run infinitely above the value of the blood of bulls and of goats. No blood, but the blood of him who is God, could satisfy Divine justice. The life of the Surety only could suffice to procure the life of the principal debtor: And this he chearfully engaged to part with, in the room and stead of his people; which certainly lays them under the strongest obligations to *praise him for ever and ever*.

(2.) Another ground and reason why the people are to *praise Christ for ever and ever*, is; that in consequence of his having become their Surety from eternity, he hath actually assumed their nature into a personal union with himself. "Both he that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all of one: For which cause, he is not ashamed to call them brethren." And saith the same Apostle, Heb. ii. 14. "For as much then, as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself like-
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“ wife took part of the same.” And as the portion of flesh and blood, which he hath taken into a state of union with his Divine Person, is holy without spot or blemish ; so he hath taken it into union with himself, not as a private, but as a public Person, representing all his spiritual seed. So that as all, descending from the first Adam by ordinary generation, have lost the holiness of their nature by their fall in and with him ; so all the spiritual seed of Christ have the Divine image restored to them in him, as the second Adam, *the Lord from heaven*. And so soon as they are really united unto his Person, by the faith of his Spirit’s operation ; they actually have communion with him, in the holiness of his human nature : Hence saith the Apostle, 2 Cor. v. 17. “ If any man be in Christ, he is a “ new creature : Old things are past away ; behold, “ all things are become new.” Now, our Lord Jesus having thus restored the Divine image to the people of his everlasting love, his so doing will afford them matter of a song of praise to him *for ever and ever*.

(3.) Our Lord Jesus has furnished matter of praise and thanksgiving to his people, *for ever and ever*, by fulfilling the law in their room and stead. None of the lapsed race of mankind could ever have entered into the heavenly rest, but in the way of the connection betwixt perfect obedience to the Divine law, in human nature, and the enjoyment of eternal life, being kept up. For although the glorious Lawgiver was graciously pleased to pass from the principal debtor ; and was pleased not only to accept of a Surety, but likewise to provide one : Yet, according to the nature of Adam’s offence, and of the threatening annexed to the covenant that was made with him, the law behoved to be fulfilled by one clothed with the nature that had sinned. Now,

our Lord Jesus having, in virtue of his own voluntary consent, been substitute in the law-room and stead of his people; and having taken upon him their nature; he hath in that nature, and as their Surety, yielded perfect obedience to the law, in their stead: And not only has he given that obedience to the law, which it had a right to demand, and reason to expect from the first Adam; but, by his obedience, he hath *magnified the law, and made it honourable*, Isa. xlii. 21. which is far more than could ever have been affirmed of the obedience, either of innocent men; or of holy Angels,—these sons of God whose primitive beauty was never defaced by sin. This is truly matter of praise to all the spiritual seed: And accordingly, we find the Church praising the Lord, because he hath wrought all her works; saying, Isa. xxvi. 12. “LORD, “thou wilt ordain peace for us: For thou hast “wrought all our works in us;” or, as the words may be read, *thou hast wrought all our works for us*. For sinful men to be saved from sin and wrath, is much: But for them to be saved therefrom, in the way of the Divine law; its being not only fulfilled, but also magnified, and made honourable; affords them the highest matter of thanksgiving, wonder and praise.

(4.) As there are to be a people praising Christ for ever, for the obedience of his life; so his death will likewise afford them matter and ground for an everlasting song. Our Lord Jesus hath not only obeyed the preceptive part of the law, in the room and stead of his people; but he hath paid their debt of punishment also. He hath endured these sufferings, and died that death which the law threatened to inflict upon its transgressors. And all this he did in the room and stead of his people; as he declares, Matth. xx. 28. “The Son of man came

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“not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.” He was wounded for the transgressions of the people, and bruised for their iniquities. By the obedience of our Lord Jesus to the preceptive part of the law, he hath made out his people’s title unto eternal life; and, by his sufferings and death, he hath effectually secured them against the curse of the law and the wrath to come. And these things are, and for ever will be matter of a song to all the ransomed of the Lord. Accordingly, we see how sweetly the beloved Disciple sings of the dying love of the Redeemer, and the precious fruits of it to the redeemed; saying, Rev. i. 5, 6. “Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God, and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.” And in this anthem of praise, we find the whole Church joining, chap. i. 9. “And they sung a new song; saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: For thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.” Here we might have mentioned our Lord’s resurrection from the dead, his ascension into heaven, his intercession; and his session at the Father’s right hand, in the character of the Head and Representative of his people: All which afford them matter of praise now, and will be had in perpetual remembrance by them in the mount Zion above; but upon these things we shall not insist.

3. *Lastly*, There shall be a people praising Christ for ever and ever; not only upon the account of what he has done for them, but also for what he is, and ever will continue to be unto them.

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They will praise him as their God-Redeemer; praise him as their Head and Husband; for the Church is the *Bride, the Lamb's wife*, Rev. xix. 9. and he is her immortal Husband. They will praise him as the Captain of their salvation; as the procurer of glory for them; and as their Guide and Conductor unto the eternal enjoyment of it. They will praise him as their Prophet, by whose teaching they are made wise unto everlasting life; and through whom God will eternally manifest his glory to them, in a manner suitable to their blessed and happy state and condition within the veil. They will praise him for ever and ever, as their great high Priest; ever living to present the merit of his obedience and death before the throne of God, as the infallible ground of their security for being continued in the eternal possession of their glorious inheritance. And they will praise him for ever as their King; who shall sit upon the throne of his glory, and dwell among them. They shall praise him as their victorious Head and Conqueror; in and by whom they have obtained the victory over the world, sin, Satan, death, and the grave, and all the evils of a present world: And by whom they are brought to the enjoyment of an *exceeding great and eternal weight of glory*. In this glory shall all the saints rejoice, and the high praises of their God shall be for ever in their mouths: For having their hearts full of love to him who "loved them, and washed them from their sins in his own blood;" their tongues shall be *as the pen of a ready writer*, in the eternal celebration of his praises. For faithful is he who hath promised, "I will make thy name to be remembered in all generations; therefore shall the people praise thee for ever and ever."

V. The *fifth* thing proposed in the method, was to make some improvement of the subject. And having endeavoured to improve it a little formerly in an use of information, we shall now conclude with a short word of exhortation. And,

I. We exhort you who are the children and people of God, to be much exercised in the duty of remembering Christ, and praising him. This is the most profitable and pleasant employment in which you can possibly be engaged. Praise him in your hearts. Be much exercised, according to the Apostles exhortation to the Ephesians, Eph. v. 19. "In speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns, and spiritual songs; singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord." Remember that all acceptable praise must spring from the heart.

Praise the Lord with your tongue, the human glory. Pray that the Lord may put off your sackcloth, and gird you with gladness; to the end that *you may praise him, and not be silent*. You who have families, remember Christ in them, and praise him. It is said concerning the righteous, that "the voice of rejoicing and salvation is heard in their tabernacles." Psal. cxviii. 15. Praise him in your closets; and praise him in your life and conversation before the world, by endeavouring to adorn the doctrine of God your Saviour in all things. "Only let your conversation be as becometh the gospel." Be concerned to grow in your praises. We read of the *garments of praise*, Isa. lxi. 3. And as you know that the garment which serves one while he is a child, will not be a sufficient clothing for him when he arrives at the stature of a man; but must be enlarged: So the people of God should enlarge the garments of their praise. The Apostle exhorts the Colossians to abound in
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the faith with thanksgiving. And in order that you may grow in your praises, we exhort you to grow in your acquaintance with Christ, and in your love to him. The better that you know Christ, and the more that you love him, the more will you remember and praise him; and the more will you abound in your gratitude to God for him; saying, *thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift.*

2. We exhort you to be concerned, not only to remember and praise Christ yourselves; but also to be concerned, in your several places and stations, to use your best endeavours for transmitting the memory of his great goodness to after generations, that they may remember and praise the Lord after you are gone.

This is a debt which the present generation always owes to the succeeding one; and a debt which, alas! the bulk of this generation is little concerned to pay. And it is matter of lamentation that many, even of those who have come under very solemn obligations to endeavour to discharge this duty to after ages, are far from being so careful about this important branch of their duty as they ought to be. Iniquity is abounding, and the love of many is waxing cold. The day wherein we live is a day of *small things*. And not only are the generality of the young and rising generation through the land, coming up in a state of unacquaintedness with the *signs of the times*, and of what *Israel* ought to do: But there are many, even of those who have risen up amongst us, since a testimony for the truth, and against the defections of former and present times, was brought to the field, who are in a great hazard of losing sight of it. They were not to see the necessity of it, at its first exhibition to the world, as their fathers were; and so have come by their witnessing profession without any trouble.

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And therefore, are in danger of turning their backs upon it, upon the smallest temptations; as, alas! some of them are from time to time doing. Beware, therefore, of their making *shipwreck of faith, and of a good conscience*; through your negligence in shewing them the way of truth and duty, and setting the copy of a holy life and conversation before them. Remember, that one special end for which God hath given you his word and ordinances, and put a testimony for the truth into your hands, is, that you may shew them to the generations to come; "that they may set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments." The Psalmist declares what is the duty that is incumbent upon each of you, in your places and stations; when he saith, Psal. xlviii. 12, 13, 15. "Walk about Zion; go round about her: Tell the towers thereof; mark ye well her bulwarks; consider her palaces." And wherefore all this care and diligent observation of every thing belonging to Zion? Why, "that ye may tell it to the generation following." "For this God is our God for ever and ever, he will be our guide even unto death."

Secondly, As for such of you as may be yet in a state of unbelief; and so altogether unacquainted with that sweet and pleasant work and exercise of remembering and praising Christ, in a believing manner; we exhort you to consider your absolute need of him, and your lost and undone state without him. Be convinced of your sin and danger; and particularly, of the sin of unbelief; and of the God-dishonouring and soul-ruining tendency of it. You have sinned in Adam; you have sinned in your own persons: But notwithstanding all that you have done to provoke the Lord to anger, and to bring everlasting destruction upon your own souls; you

you cannot perish, if you do not add the sin of final unbelief to all your other provocations; for *the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin*: And he *that believeth in him shall be saved*, whatever he hath been or done before. Seek, then, that the holy Spirit may acquaint you savingly with Christ; that he may shew you the King in his beauty; cause you to behold his suitableness to the case and condition of your souls; and so determine you to lay hold upon him by faith, as your Saviour from sin and wrath: And then you will remember him with delight; and your meditations of him will be sweet: You will esteem his love more than wine, and praise him with joyful lips.

Lastly, We conclude, exhorting you who are young people, to begin early to remember Christ: Great is the need that you have to remember him in a believing manner: You have destroyed yourselves, and your help is only in him.

Begin early to remember who Christ is. He is *God equal with the Father*; and so able to save you from sin and wrath. Remember what he has done and suffered: He hath fulfilled all righteousness, and drunk out the cup of Divine wrath. Remember that he did so, not for any sin inherent in himself. The MESSIAH was indeed cut off; but not for himself. It was, that sinners of mankind thro' him might be saved. We intreat you to consider, that he calls, invites, and makes you most heartily welcome, to take the benefit of what he hath done and suffered. All who hear the gospel are welcome to him; welcome to enter into his labours: And great is the encouragement that young persons have to come to him for life and salvation: *They that seek me early shall find me*, says he. And when persons are determined to give him their hearts in their young days, he speaks of it with an

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air of holy satisfaction and delight. Hence says he, Jer. ii. 2. " Thus saith the Lord, I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals; when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown." We exhort you, then, to give yourselves to the Lord in your young days; and to begin early to enter seriously into the believing consideration of these things which belong to your everlasting peace; before you fall into the throng and hurry of the world, and while the habits of sin are not so strong as they may afterwards come to be. It is truly good to be in Christ, and particularly good to be in him early: And among many other advantages attending early acquaintance with Christ, this is readily one; namely, a more gentle and easy passage from spiritual death to spiritual life. Look to the Lord, then, that he may determine you, by the power of his Spirit and grace, believingly to lay claim to Christ, as *the Lord your Righteousness*: And then shall you remember what he is, and what he hath done, to your real comfort and consolation while in the present world; and be among those unspeakably blessed and happy people, who shall remember and praise him world without end; " Saying, with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing." *Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.*

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Diseased

Diseased Sinners healed by the Stripes of
CHRIST:

A S E R M O N,

Preached at the Celebration of the LORD's Sup-
per, at Ceres, August 5. 1781.

a Ret. ii. 24. — *By whose stripes ye were healed.*

JESUS CHRIST in his sufferings, and the glory following thereon, is the great subject of the gospel. He is the centre of all Divine truth; and no duty can be performed in a manner that is acceptable to God, but as it is performed in the strength of his grace, and in some measure of conformity to his example. To Jesus Christ give all the Prophets witness under the Old Testament, and all the Apostles under the New. The great Apostle of the Gentiles determined not to know any thing among those to whom he preached and wrote, *save Jesus Christ, and him crucified*, 2 Cor. ii. 2. Yea, so full was he of Christ, that when he enjoins husbands to love their wives, he fetches his motives to enforce the exhortation from the consideration of Christ's love to the Church, as evidenced by his laying down his life for her, Eph. v. 25. And the Apostle Peter having, in the 18th verse of this chapter, directed servants to be dutiful and obedient to their own masters, and that not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward; he sets the example of Christ before them, as the most proper and powerful motive to enforce the exhortation, ver. 21. He suffered wrongfully at
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the hands of men, and yet did bear it with amazing meekness and patience. Our Apostle having insisted at some length upon Christ as the Christian's pattern, and example of obedience and patience under tribulation: Lest any should imagine from what he had said, that our Lord's death was only designed as an example of patience under sufferings; in the verse whereto our text is a part, he adds a more glorious design and effect of it, when he saith, "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sin should live unto righteousness;" where the Apostle sets before us the person suffering, with the meritorious cause of his so doing. The person suffering, is Jesus Christ his own self, in his own body. These words, *his own self*, and, *in his own body*, are very emphatical, and necessary to shew, that our Lord Jesus Christ fulfilled all the ancient prophecies and types; and to distinguish him from the Levitical priest-hood, who offered only the blood of others; whereas "he, by himself, purged our sins," Heb. i. 3. And saith that same Apostle elsewhere, "He appeared once in the end of the world, to put away sin, by the sacrifice of himself." The words, *his own self*, and, *in his own body*, are also used by the Apostle, to shew that all others are excluded from any participation with Christ, in the work of man's redemption.

The procuring cause of his sufferings was our sin. *He bare our sins in his own body on the tree.* He stood charged with our sins, as one who had undertaken to put them away by the sacrifice of himself, Isa. liii. 6. And as he stood charged with our sin by virtue of the Father's appointment, and his own voluntary undertaking; he likewise bare the punishment due to us upon account of them,
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and so satisfied the justice of God for us. He took up the iniquity of all the sons and daughters whom God the Father designed to bring to glory, that he might bear it away for ever from them: Hence called *the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world*, John i. 29.

In the words more immediately under consideration, we are informed what is the benefit that results from the sufferings of Christ, to all who are determined by grace to lay claim thereto by faith. All those receive healing by his stripes. *By whose stripes ye were healed.*

1. We may observe to whom these words are spoken: They are primarily directed to those servants whom the Apostle had been exhorting to bear injuries with Christian patience, after the example of the great Head. It is probable, that much of the bad treatment which they met with from their froward masters, was owing to their having embraced the Christian faith: And the Apostle would suggest to them, that they had great ground and reason to endure hardness for Christ's sake, and the Gospel's; seeing they were healed of the dreadful wounds of sin, by the costly medicine of the precious blood of Jesus. He did not hide his face from shame and spitting, in order that they might be healed. The Apostle, or the Spirit of God by him, is also to be considered here, as speaking to all true believers, in every after period of the Church, as really as to those Christian servants to whom these words were first directed. Others besides those who have formerly believed, and do now believe, may be healed by the stripes of Christ; but it can be affirmed only concerning true believers, that they are already healed.

2. We have the case supposed, which all those who now believe, were once in, and their present happy

happy condition declared. They were once in a diseased condition, having their whole man covered over with the leprosy of sin, which is truly a dangerous and lothsome disease. But now they are healed; their wound by the guilt of sin is healed by pardoning mercy, and the power of sin is broken in them by regenerating grace.

3. We may observe the sovereign remedy by which diseased sinners are healed; namely, the stripes of Christ; *by whose stripes ye were healed.* By the stripes of Christ, we are to understand all that he did and suffered in the room and stead of an elect world; while the obedience of his life, was as necessary in order to the recovery of our spiritual health, as his sufferings and death were. For, although our deliverance from sin and wrath is frequently ascribed to the blood of Christ; in regard that it was by his pouring out his soul unto death, that he put the last hand to the work of our redemption, in respect of purchase: Yet our redemption is so ascribed to his sufferings and death, as that the obedience of his life is also included in the price which he laid down to the law and justice of God for us. The words of the text are taken by the Apostle from Isa. liii. 5. "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed." And the doctrine of the text is,

That all true believers are healed by virtue of the stripes which were laid upon Christ, as their Surety. The method which we shall endeavour to observe, is,

I. To remark some things concerning the stripes or sufferings which our Lord Jesus underwent in the room and stead of sinners.

II. To

II. To mention a few things implied in sinners being healed by the stripes of Christ.

III. To enquire a little how it is that sinners are healed by Christ's stripes.

IV. To make some short improvement of the subject; and all is proposed, as the Lord may be pleased to aid and direct.

I. The *first* thing proposed was, to remark some things concerning the stripes or sufferings which our Lord Jesus underwent, in the room and stead of sinners. And,

1. We may remark, that Jesus Christ was appointed to suffering work from eternity. He was set up from everlasting in the Council of Peace, as the Head and Surety of an elect world; and appointed to bear those stripes which were due to them, on account of their covenant-violation in the first Adam, and their own personal provocations. Hence saith our Lord Jesus, Prov. viii. 23. "I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was." And the Spirit of God declares, Acts iv. 27, 28. that all which Christ suffered by the instrumentality of Herod, Pontius Pilate, the Gentiles, and the people of the Jews; was no more than what God's hand and Counsel had before determined to be done. God saw the whole race of Adam, the elect not excepted, lying in sin, and under a burden of misery; from which none of them could by any means extricate themselves, nor was it in the power of any creature to do it: And he was graciously pleased to substitute his own Son in the room and stead of his select company, and transfer their guilt over upon him; that he might bear the punishment which they deserved, that so they might be healed by his stripes.

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2. We remark, that the person who bare these stripes is God's own Son, his dear Son, his well-beloved Son, the man who is God's Fellow; the same in substance, and equal in power and glory with the Father and Holy Spirit. The human nature of Christ, it is true, was the subject of his sufferings; he only did, and he only was capable of suffering in the human nature; but the person who suffered, and by whose stripes sinners are healed, is God. Hence the blood of Jesus is expressly called *the blood of God*, Acts xx. 28. and in 1 John iii. 16. God is said to have *laid down his life for us*. It was only as man that he could suffer and die; but the person who suffered being God, whatever he did and suffered in the human nature, derives an infinite value and efficacy from the dignity of his person. The divine nature of Christ was the altar, which sanctified the gift of the human nature, and gave an infinite worth and excellency to the sacrifice which he offered to God. Accordingly he is said to have offered himself to God *through the eternal Spirit*, Heb. ix. 14. that is, according to the judicious Dr Owen, he offered himself through the power of his divine nature or Godhead.

3. We remark, that the stripes which Christ endured were very heavy; they were such as no creature could have stood under; they were stripes of a penal nature, imbittered by the law-curse. Our Lord Jesus was *made a curse for us*, Gal. iii. 13. and saith that same Apostle, elsewhere, *God hath made him to be sin, or a sin-offering for us*; that is, God hath subjected him to the penalty of the law, and dealt with him in all respects as if he had really been the violator of it in his own person. Christ suffered both in his soul and in his body; and his soul-sufferings, were, if we may so speak,

speaking, the very soul of his sufferings. We had sinned both in soul and body, and it behoved him as our Surety to suffer in both. He endured sufferings from many hands. He suffered at the hand of man; he suffered much from Satan, the Prince of this world; and he suffered most of all by the hand of his heavenly Father, acting toward him as an offended Judge: And all that he suffered was, as hath been already observed, of a penal nature; as may be gathered from the consideration of the nature of his undertaking in the New Covenant, his bloody agony in the garden, Luke xxii. 44. from the ardent desire he had to have his sufferings accomplished, Luke xii. 50. and from his being under desertion when on the cross.

4. We remark, that our Lord Jesus endured his sufferings, and bare his stripes with great patience, cheerfulness, and resignation to the will of his heavenly Father. He suffered himself to be *led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep is dumb before her shearers, so he opened not his mouth*; in the way of complaint under his most agonizing pains and sufferings. He offered himself as a free-will offering to the justice of God, for the sins of his people. It is true, all his sufferings were obediential: Hence he is said to have become *obedient unto death, even the death of the cross*, Phil. ii. 8. But, for one to act obedientially, or in virtue of a commandment, and to act voluntarily at the same time, is no way inconsistent. Our Lord Jesus undertook, and went through with the work of our redemption, at the desire, and by the appointment of the Father; and this was necessary in order to his being accepted in it; but he acted, at the same time, in the most free, cheerful, and voluntary manner. Accordingly, we find him asserting both the obligation which he was under to lay down his life, in

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virtue of the Divine commandment; and the free and unconstrained manner in which he did so, John x. 17, 18. "I lay down my life (says he), no man taketh it from me, I lay it down of myself: I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father."

5. We remark, that the stripes which Christ endured were necessary stripes: His sufferings were all necessary. He ought to suffer these things; it became him to fulfil all righteousness. It is very true, he was under no necessity of enduring these stripes prior to his gracious and voluntary consent and undertaking to do so, (if we could conceive of any thing prior thereto): But once that the Father had intimate his will, that *the chastisement of our peace should be laid upon him*; and once that he gave his consent that it should be so, which we find he did, Psal. xl. 6. and putting the case, that any of mankind should be healed of the disease of sin; then these stripes were necessary. For *without shedding of blood is no remission*; and no blood was sufficient to procure the remission of our sins but blood of an infinite value.

6. and lastly, The stripes of Christ are medicinal. *By his stripes ye were healed.* All the sufferings of Christ are of a healing nature and quality: Many diseased souls have been healed by his stripes already, and still they retain their healing virtue and efficacy: These stripes have an infinite worth and value in them to heal, and they are under a Divine appointment for the healing of the nations. They have a virtue in them for the healing of all manner of diseases among the people: Hence saith the Apostle, 1 John i. 7. "The blood of Jesus Christ—cleanseth us from all sin." It *cleanseth from all sin*, and it hath a present efficacy in it to do so:

The Apostle doth not merely say, It hath cleansed some from all sin, or, It shall cleanse sinners from their sins in some after period; but, says he, It cleanseth in the present time; it ever retains a present virtue in it for healing the disease of sin.

II. The *second* thing proposed in the method, was, to mention a few things implied in sinners being healed by the stripes of Christ. And,

1. Sinners being healed by the stripes of Christ, or in virtue of what he did and suffered, implies, that law and justice admitted of another's being smitten, in order that they might be healed; or, that the law admitted of a Surety in the stead of the principal debtor. Although the Covenant of Works provided no remedy, in case of its being broken; yet it did not forbid or exclude one from stepping into the law-room and stead of the transgressor. Indeed the penal statute annexed to the law-covenant, appears, at first view, in such an awful light, as if it behoved for ever to exclude fallen men from entertaining any the least hope of ever being again restored to the Divine favour; but when we view this matter in a gospel light, we see, that God, who is the best interpreter of his own law, did so order all things in the Covenant of Works, as to leave room for a Surety to interpose in the behalf of sinners, when that Covenant should be broken,—an event which he foresaw would most certainly come to pass.

2. Sinners being healed by the stripes of Christ, implies his having assumed their nature. It behoved him to be made like unto his brethren; hence saith the Apostle, Heb. ii. 14. "For as much then as the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same." That our Lord Jesus should assume the human nature was absolutely necessary, not only that he might

might be capable of suffering, and having *the chastisement of our peace laid upon him*; but likewise that his sufferings might be accepted of God as the price of our redemption. For although the Sovereign Lawgiver admitted of a change of persons, that is, a Surety in the room of the principal debtor; yet satisfaction to law and justice could not be accepted but out of the hand of one who was really *bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh*. Nay, law and justice could not have had any claim upon Christ for satisfaction, nor have laid these stripes upon him whereby we come to be healed; if he had not been *found in fashion as a man*. The human nature was, so to speak, the horn whereby our glorious Surety was caught in the thicket of justice, that he might be offered a sacrifice in our stead. By our breach of covenant in the first Adam, we have not only contracted a debt, but we have also committed a capital crime against the Sovereign of heaven and earth; and therefore one in that nature which had sinned behoved to suffer. It may be observed, in a word here, that, according to the tenor and frame of the Covenant of Works, it was simply impossible that any of Adam's fallen family could ever enter into life eternal; but in the way of an inviolable connection betwixt perfect obedience to the law in human nature, and the enjoyment of eternal happiness, being kept up.

3. Sinners being healed by the stripes of Christ, implies his actual substitution in their law-room and stead; his having had their sins reckoned to his account, and his having borne the punishment due to them on account of these their sins. All sufferings presuppose sin, either imputed or inherent: Without this, there could be no suffering, no death. Now, although our Lord Jesus was *holy, harmless, undefiled, and separated from sinners*, and so knew

no sin; yet the sin of a whole elect world was laid upon him by imputation: Hence saith the Prophet Isa. liii. 6. "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all." Or, according to the marginal reading, "he hath made the iniquities of us all to meet upon him." And saith the Apostle Peter, *His own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree.* And another Apostle saith, *He was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.* And as the sins of the whole elect world were laid over upon Christ, so he really bare the punishment due to them on the account of these transgressions. *The chastisement of our peace, saith the Prophet, or, that chastisement, those stripes, whereby our peace was procured, were laid upon him.*

4. Sinners being healed by the stripes of Christ, supposes that he bare these stripes in the character of a Surety, as he is expressly called, Heb. vii. 22. He bare them as sustaining the persons of his people. He did not only bear these stripes for the good of his people, but he did so in their law-room and stead. That this was really the case will appear,

(1.) When we consider express Scripture testimony. Our Lord himself tells us, Matth. xx. 28. *that he came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for, or, in the stead of the many.* And saith the Prophet Isaiah, chap. liii. 5. "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed."

(2.) When we consider that Christ was really charged with our sins, Isa. liii. 6. "The Lord laid upon him the iniquities of us all." As the sacrifices

crifices under the law had a relation to the offerers, or those who brought them to the priest, being substitute in the room of the offerers, and their sins being typically transferred over to them; so all the sins of an elect world were really laid over upon Christ, and reckoned to his account, as really as if he had committed them in his own person. They were laid upon him, and he bare them in his own body on the tree.

(3.) When we consider that the punishment due to the sins of his people was really inflicted upon him. The sins of the people were not only imputed unto him, but he likewise suffered for them: Hence he is said to have been made sin and a curse for us, 2 Cor. v. 22. Gal. v. 13. He was made a sin-offering, and bound over to the revenging wrath of God, for the sins of his people, until law and justice were completely satisfied: Hence saith the Lord, Isa. liii. 8. "For the transgression of my people was he stricken." He endured the same sufferings which the people were liable to have undergone. He suffered both in his soul and in his body; he died the same kind of death to which they were subject; he was brought to the dust of death; he was under the hiding of his Father's face for a season, which was an equivalent of that spiritual death under which his people were lying. And, that his death was not eternal, was not owing to any abatement in the sufferings his people were liable to on account of sin, but to the dignity of the Person suffering. Our Lord Jesus being an infinite Person, there was an infinite worth and value in his sufferings.

(4.) When we consider that the sufferings and death of Christ are reckoned to the account of sinners, in the day of their conversion, as really as if they themselves had been the sufferers: Hence be-

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lievers are said to be *crucified with Christ*, Gal. ii. 20. ; and to have *died* with him, Rom. vi. 8. ; and God is said to have *condemned* the sin of his people in the flesh of Christ, Rom. viii. 3.

In a word, it is clear that Christ died in the character of a Surety-Priest, that is, in the room and stead of sinners ; when we consider that they are warranted to lay claim to the benefit of what he hath done and suffered by faith, as if they had done and suffered all in their own persons : Hence we find the Apostle Paul pressing sinners of mankind, without exception of any, to come forward by faith, and take the benefit of what Christ hath done as the Surety of the New Covenant ; where he saith, 2 Cor. v. 20, 21. " Now we are Ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us : " We pray you, in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled " to God. For he hath made him to be sin for " us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the " righteousness of God in him." Every sinner of mankind, when he finds himself pursued by the law-curse, may warrantably betake himself to Christ, as the *Lord his Righteousness* ; upon the footing of the gift which God hath made of him in the gospel, to all who will accept of him, without excluding any.

5. Persons being said to be healed by the stripes of Christ, implies, that God hath accepted of, and is well pleased with the satisfaction which he hath made to his justice, by his obedience, sufferings and death ; *God is well pleased for his righteousness sake*, Isa. xlii. 21. And saith the Apostle Paul, in the name of all true believers, Gal. v. 2. " Christ " hath loved us, and hath given himself for us, " an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet " smelling savour ;" or, for a savour of rest, alluding to the sacrifice which Noah offered to God immediately

immediately after the deluge, Gen. viii. 21. There are three times wherein, in a particular manner, we find JEHOVAH, in the person of the Father, speaking with an audible voice, viz. Matth. iii. 17. chap. xvii. 5. and John xii. 28.; and all these times he is just in effect declaring, that he is well pleased with what his beloved Son hath done and suffered in the law-room and stead of mankind sinners. Many ways hath God evidenced his delight and satisfaction in what Christ hath done and suffered in the stead of poor guilty sinners. He hath done so, by raising him from the dead; by receiving him to his own right hand, in the heavenly sanctuary; by sending the Spirit to glorify him, in the application of the purchased redemption. He hath done so, by all the spiritual health and cure which he hath vouchsafed upon any of our fallen family; and he is daily doing so, by continuing a dispensation of the gospel in the world.

6. *Lastly*, Sinners being healed by the stripes of Christ, implies their being brought forward to take the benefit of these stripes by faith: And this implies their being brought to see their sickness and wounds in the glass of the law; and their having received the Spirit of faith, whereby they have been enabled to embrace the Saviour. A sinner's being brought forward cordially to accept of health and cure from Christ, is as much of grace as the providing of the remedy is: Hence saith the Apostle, Eph. ii. 8. "By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that," viz. faith, "not of yourselves; it is the gift of God."

We now pass on to the next thing proposed in the method, which was,

III. To enquire a little, how it is that sinners are healed by Christ's stripes.

1. Believers are, by the stripes of Christ, healed of the deadly wound which they have received by the guilt of sin. The blood of Christ is the medicine; by the merit of it, the sins of believers are expiated. *He was bruised for their iniquities.* The blood of Christ is the price of the sinner's redemption. Believers are redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, 1 Pet. i. 18. as the meritorious cause of their deliverance. They have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sin; according to the riches of God's grace, reigning through his law-magnifying righteousness. Every true believer is as whole in respect of his state, as ever he has to be; for "there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus," Rom. viii. 1. All his iniquities are forgiven; and his restoration to a state of perfect health and soundness, stands inseparably connected with his being justified: For whom the Lord justifies, these he will most assuredly glorify, Rom. viii. 30. They who have received abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by one Jesus Christ.

2. They are healed in the way of being delivered from the reigning power of sin, and its filth and defilement, by the efficacy of the Spirit of Christ. Sin is a disease, that does not only render men guilty before God, but it likewise makes them appear loathsome in his sight; and both the guilt and the stain of sin is taken away by Christ.

The guilt of sin is removed by remission, and the stain washed away by purification. Christ heals us of the guilt of sin, as he is made of God unto us righteousness; and of the filth of sin, as he is made of God to us sanctification. Both the justification of the guilty, and the sanctification of the filthy, flows from the pierced side of Christ; for he came
both

both by water and by blood, 1 John v. 6. When Christ was pierced, the blood and water, denoting two distinct blessings, flowed from his side at once; and they both make their way into the sinner's heart at once. All whom God heals by pardoning their sins, he heals them also by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. The cure, the good work, as the Apostle designs it, Phil. i. 6. is begun in all the faculties of the soul, and members of the body in regeneration.

The spiritual eye is healed, and the person made light in the Lord. The rebellion and obstinacy of the will is brought under. The affections, such as love, hatred, desire, joy and delight, are set upon their proper objects, a God in Christ. The conscience is purged from dead works, is cleansed, and so pacified. The memory is healed from its being a leaking vessel, respecting any thing spiritually good; it is made a treasure-house, containing some of the divine truths, and precious experiences of God's goodness to the soul. In a word here, all the members of the body are converted into instruments of righteousness unto holiness.

Finally, The Spirit of God carries on the begun cure gradually to perfection, by the renewed application of the virtue and efficacy of Christ's stripes to the heart and conscience; and this he does by means of the word: He sends his word and heals the soul, Psal. cvii. 20.; he does it by means of affliction; he makes the rod of correction a mean in his hand, of driving away the folly of the heart: Hence afflictions are said to work for the saints, *an exceeding great and eternal weight of glory*, 2 Cor. iv. 17. See also Isa. xxvii. 9. "By this, therefore, shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged; and this is all the fruit to take away sin." It is true, no afflictions that persons can

be under, can in the least expiate guilt, satisfy the justice of God, nor yet remove the filth and pollution of sin; but they are means in the Lord's hand for discovering to persons the evil of sin, and to excite and stir them up to improve by faith the blood of Christ, by which alone sin is expiated, and the Spirit of Christ by whom it is mortified and slain.

In one word here, the cure that is begun in justification, and carried on in sanctification, is perfected, in respect of the soul, at death; and the whole man shall not only be delivered from the disease of sin, but also from all the woful effects of it, in the day of the general resurrection: When the Lord Jesus shall descend from heaven, in the day of complete redemption, he shall change the vile bodies of his saints, that they may be fashioned like to his own glorious body.

We come now to make some application of the subject, which was the

IV. and *last* thing proposed in the method. And,

1. The *first* use of the doctrine may be for information. And,

(1.) Hence see the melancholy condition that all mankind are in by nature: They are in a sick and wounded condition; a disease that is lothsome hath filled their loins with pain; the whole man is run over with the noisome and painful leprosy of sin. Every man, by nature, is under an insupportable burden both of guilt and pollution; chargeable with original sin, which lays him open to the wrath of God previous to his being capable of sinning in his own person; besides innumerable actual transgressions, wherewith he stands chargeable.

(2.) We may see, that diseased sinners cannot heal themselves. They have nothing of their own to molify and bind up their wounds, or prevent the

the disease from issuing in certain death ; nor can all the angels in heaven, and men on earth, heal one soul of the disease of sin. All legal endeavours to procure health to the soul are to no purpose. Men may go to the law for health, to their duties, good resolutions, and purposes of amendment of life and conversation ; they may go to the imaginary treasure of the merit of saints, and they may depend upon a purgatory, for the completion of what they think they have not effected by what they call their own good works : But they will find their success no better than Judah and Ephraim did, when they sent to king Jareb for the recovery of their health as a nation, *Hos. v. 13.* “ When Ephraim saw his sickness, and Judah saw his wound, then went Ephraim to the Assyrian, and sent to king Jareb ; yet could he not heal you, nor cure you of your wounds.”

There is no remedy against the malady of sin but the stripes of Christ ; and there is no hand that can apply that remedy but his own. He is both the *balm of Gilead* and the *Physician* there.

(3.) We may see what rich display a God of infinite love and grace hath made of his kindness to sinners of mankind ; in providing such a remedy for their diseased souls, as the stripes, the blood and righteousness of his own Son. He hath shewed us the riches of his grace, in his kindness to us, thro’ Christ Jesus. It pleased the Lord to give him to be broken and bruised, that he might bring forth a medicine from his pierced side for the healing of the nations : And, having raised him from the dead, he is setting him before diseased sinners of mankind, without exception, that whosoever of them *believe in him may not perish, but have everlasting life.* And as God the Father hath herein richly manifested his love to poor perishing sinners ; so the love
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of God the Son is rendered no less conspicuous, in giving himself to be wounded for their transgressions, and bruised for their iniquities. In love to the souls of men, "he gave his back to the smiters, and his cheeks to them that plucked off the hair." Well may we say with the Apostle, 1 John iii. 16. "Hereby perceive we the love of God, in that he hath laid down his life for us." Nor can we less admire the love of God the Holy Ghost; in his condescending to undertake an office, for applying the virtue and efficacy of Christ's stripes to the hearts and consciences of men.

(4.) We may see that all true believers are an unspeakably happy people. Believers, your deadly wound is healed by justification and regeneration; you are passed from death unto life, and you can never come into condemnation. Happy indeed are the people who are in such a case as this. God has begun a good and gracious work in you; and you may be confident of it, that he "will finish it until the day of Jesus Christ," Phil. i. 6. Sin, the remains of the disease, may rage in you; but it can never obtain the victory over you, as the Apostle declares to the believing Romans, chap. vi. 14. "Sin shall not have the dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace." Ye are not under the law as a Covenant of Works, but ye are under grace, within the rainbow of the New Covenant; where grace reigns through righteousness to everlasting life, by Jesus Christ your Lord, and by whose stripes you are healed. Moreover, as we here see the happiness of all true believers, so we may likewise learn, from what hath been said, that they have good cause to be humble. Believers, you, as well as others, did destroy yourselves; and you were equally incapable as others to do any thing to keep back your lives from the pit,

pit, and your souls from destruction; you brought the disease upon yourselves by your own sin and folly, and you could do nothing for the removing of it more than others; your cure is effected, and spiritual health restored, entirely at the expence of another: And the consideration of these things calls loudly upon you to walk humbly with him by whose stripes you were healed; and to excite and stir up your own souls to a thankful remembrance of all the gracious benefits which he hath so liberally bestowed upon you.

Finally, We may see matter of reproof to all who seek for health and cure to their diseased souls, any where else but from the stripes of Christ. Some seek spiritual health from angels and departed saints, as Papists. Some seek it from their duties; as those you read of, who said, Isa. lxiv. 6. "Wherefore have we fasted, and thou seest us not?" Some seek health to their souls from the absolute mercy of God; from mercy that has no connection with a crucified Christ: And others seek health to their souls from ordinances, but not from Christ in ordinances. Duties and ordinances are only means, in the use of which the Holy Spirit is graciously pleased to apply the virtue and efficacy of Christ's stripes to the souls and consciences of men; but they cannot, of themselves, give health to the soul.

In a word here, all are reprovably, from this subject, who do not betake themselves to the stripes of Christ, for health and cure to their souls. All who hear the gospel are warranted, called and invited to do so; and there is no case that can miscarry in his hand; for his stripes are effectual to heal all manner of diseases among the people.

2. The *second* use of the doctrine may be for trial and examination. It is the indispensable duty
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of all, to examine and try whether they have yet experienced the healing efficacy of Christ's stripes. Upon this use of the doctrine, we shall only ask you the few following questions.

(1.) Were you ever made sensible of the diseased case and condition of your souls? Have you seen your sickness and your wounds? One special reason why so few betake themselves to the stripes of Christ for healing, is, that they are not sensible of their disease. They appear to be whole in their own blinded eyes; and therefore think they do not need the physician. If, then, you have been determined to apply to the stripes of Christ for spiritual health, you have seen the real need you had to do so, by means of the law brought close home to the conscience; for by it is the knowledge of sin.

(2.) Have you seen and been convinced of the vanity of every attempt to heal yourselves? Have you seen and been really persuaded in your own experience, that *by the works of the law no flesh can be justified in the sight of God*; and, being persuaded of this, have you been brought, under the power and influence of Divine grace, to believe in Jesus Christ, that you might be *justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law*?

(3.) When the wound is healed, the pain of the patient is removed. What know you about the conscience being quieted, and its tumults stayed? Those who are "justified by faith, have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ," Rom. v. 1. And they who have peace with God, are not altogether strangers to some measure of peace with their own consciences. Is the reigning power of sin broken in you? If you are healed by the stripes of Christ, though sin remains in you, and rages, being opposed by the principle of grace that is im-
planted

planted in you by the holy Spirit; yet it does not reign in your mortal bodies, so as to be obeyed by you in the lusts of it.

(4.) How came you by health and cure? Was it in the way of being led directly to the stripes of Christ, the glorious Physician? What, then, think you of your Healer? What think you of Christ, who gave himself to be broken for you? Do you love him, both on account of his own personal excellency, and of what he has done for you, by making his own blood and stripes the healing balm for your souls; and applying it to you with his own hand, by the Spirit?

(5.) Do you long for the cure being made perfect? Is remaining sin and corruption your real burden? Are you concerned to improve the stripes of Christ daily by faith, both for the preservation and increase of your spiritual health?

In a word, Do you desire still to press after more intimate acquaintance with your tender-hearted Physician; *as made of God to you, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption.*

These are a few things, some of which, if not all of them, have been experienced by all who have been healed by the stripes of Christ.

3. The *last* use of the doctrine shall be in a word of exhortation. And,

(1.) We exhort such as are healed, to bless the Lord for their spiritual health. You who are healed by the stripes of Christ, your proper exercise is set before you, Psal. ciii. 2, 3. It is to say with the Psalmist, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits; who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases." And in order to excite your own souls to gratitude and thankfulness, think frequently upon the woful condition

condition you were in before you were restored to spiritual health.

(2.) Be much concerned, daily to improve the stripes of Christ by faith, for carrying forward and perfecting the begun recovery of your spiritual health. The same remedy that began the cure, can only make it perfect; and the sovereign balm is ever at your hand, in the word of grace and promise, within the reach of an applying faith; and it has a present and lasting virtue. Hence saith the Apostle, 1 John i. 7. "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

Finally, We exhort you to improve your spiritual health, by exercising a holy diligence and activity in the service of God, in your places and stations. Remember that you are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein ye were held; "that ye should serve the Lord in newness of Spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter." Be concerned, particularly such of you as are intended communicants, to attend to the duty of *shewing forth his death, by whose stripes ye are healed*; with faith, love, and spiritual joy. "Eat your bread with cheerfulness, and drink your wine with a merry heart." Let your spiritual desires be enlarged: Open your mouths wide, and take your spiritual food; for this is for your health. *He by whose stripes ye are healed*, is saying to you, "Eat, O friends, drink, yea drink abundantly, O beloved." "Eat ye that which is good, and let your souls delight themselves in fatness."

Moreover, as for such of you as were never led out to make a believing improvement of the stripes of Christ, for health and cure to your souls; we exhort you to consider what a sad state and condition you are in; *you are full of wounds and bruises,*
and

and putrifying sores; yea, you are legally and morally dead, *dead in trespasses and sins.*

We exhort you to consider, that you can do nothing for your own recovery. "Your bones are dried, your hope is lost, and you are cut off for your parts." We exhort you to consider, that the stripes of Christ are the only remedy for your disease; they are the only mean of heaven's appointment, for removing your malady, and restoring you to spiritual health and soundness. Jesus Christ, in the virtue and efficacy of his obedience and death, is the balm that is in Gilead, and the Physician there. We intreat you to consider, that he is set up in the dispensation of the gospel, by JEHOVAH the Father, as the Physician of a diseased world; it is Christ's very work and office to heal diseased souls; as he tells you, *Exod. xv. 26.* "I am the Lord that healeth thee." Consider, that he is willing, and that presently, to heal you; he is presently wanting you to put healing-work in his hand; he is saying to every one of you, as he did to the impotent man you read of *John v. 6.* "Wilt thou be made whole?"

If it should be asked, What are the diseases which this glorious Physician heals by the merit and efficacy of his stripes? We answer, he heals old sores; he takes out the root of the disease by the merit of his stripes, and the efficacy of his Spirit. He grants the forgiveness of sin; and roots up the sin of the heart and nature, by regenerating grace, in such measure and degree as that it no longer reigns in the hearts of believers: *He takes away the heart of stone, and gives the heart of flesh, Ezek. xxxvi. 26.* and *saves by the washing of regeneration, Tit. iii. 5.* He heals of these diseases which his people contract in their daily walk and conversation, by the renewing of the Holy Ghost; or by the renew-

and application of the virtue and efficacy of his stripes to the conscience by his Spirit.

He heals these diseases which persons under them are ready, when under the awakenings of conscience, to reckon incurable. Hence says he, Isa. i. 18. "Come now, and let us reason together," saith the Lord : "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." He heals the disease of backsliding and apostacy, which is indeed a very grievous sore. Hence we see such as have fallen from first love called to repent; and a gracious promise of health and cure held out to them, as their encouragement to comply with the call, Hos. xiv. 4, 5. "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely." There was a healing virtue that went forth from the stripes of Christ, even to many of those who were the wicked instruments of laying them upon him, as you see Acts ii.

But not to insist, by enumerating particulars here, because there would be no end of doing so; we observe, that the stripes of Christ heal every disease; but that, the nature and malignity of which lies in a wilful, malicious, and final refusing to be beholden to his stripes for health and cure. Nor is it owing to any deficiency of virtue and efficacy in the stripes of Christ, that this disease is not thereby healed: But because the sinner, who is once under the dreadful malady, despises the only Sacrifice for sin and means of pardon: "There being no other name under heaven given among men, by which we must be saved, but the name of Jesus," who is contemptuously rejected by the sinner who is under this disease.

We hope there are none here who are under this awful distemper: And every one of you may be

be assured that you are not, if you are afraid that you are so; or in the smallest measure concerned about your unbelief, or have any desire after salvation through Christ, and are content to be forever indebted to the riches of his grace. Let every diseased sinner in this company, then, be concerned presently to betake him and herself to the blood and righteousness of Christ, for health and cure to their souls; that so there may be cause to say, concerning you, to the glory of the Physician, and the unspeakable comfort of your own souls, "by whose stripes ye were healed."

Most ample is the encouragement Jesus Christ is giving you, to apply to him for health and cure to your diseased souls; while he is telling you, John iii. 14, 15. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life."

THE END.

ERRATA.

- Page 26. line 13. *for impertation read impetration.*
P. 37. line 3. *for any read and.*
P. 160. line 1. *for guilt read a sense of the guilt.*
In the Folio from p. 147. to p. 175. *for people read enemies.*
P. 229. line 29. *for and read or.*
P. 296. line 27. *for whence read when.*
P. 298. line 29. *dele is.*
P. 326. line 29. *for Philim read Philip.*

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* * Those who chuse to bind this Work in two Volumes, will begin Vol. 2. with p. 285, Sermon XII.

